

L E T T E R S

FROM THE

DUCHESS DE CRUI AND OTHERS,

O N

SUBJECTS MORAL AND ENTERTAINING,

WHEREIN THE

CHARACTER OF THE FEMALE SEX,

WITH

Their RANK, IMPORTANCE, and CONSEQUENCE

IS STATED,

A N D

Their RELATIVE DUTIES in LIFE are enforced.

By A L A D Y.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N,

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MDCCLXXVI.

35

LETTERS

FROM THE

DUCHESS OF GLOUCESTER AND OTHERS

OF

SUBJECT, MORAL AND ENTERTAINING

RESPECTING THE

CHARACTER OF THE FEMALE SEX

L. L. Banks



OF

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L E T T E R XIV.

From the Duchefs DE CRUI, to Mrs.
PIERPONT.

DEAR MADAM,

I Return you many thanks for your agreeable letter, and for the praises you, indirectly, bestow on me; for though I may be conscious of not deserving them, yet we are fond of standing high in the opinion of those we love.

I always knew, my dear Mrs. Pierpont, that your sufferings had been great, from the worst of men; you know that I always wished you to be separated from him: but you judged

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other-

otherwise.—I beg the favour you will acquaint me with the reasons that determined you against that step: *a step*, which the badness of his temper alone would have excused your undertaking, had you no other case of complaint against him. It appears to me very strange, that any one who would scruple to commit a murder, can without regret, take pains to rack peoples minds. His conduct, in regard to the *will*, was very much in character; he was unwilling to think of the evil day in which he was to bid adieu to his large possessions in this world, as he had so little to expect in the next. Errors of the judgment ought ever to be allowed for, since the wisest persons are liable to mistake, if, upon any occasion, they omit consulting their reason, and suffer themselves to be led away by passion; but

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but if they consult their reason, if they commit a wrong action upon cool deliberation, then are they wholly inexcusable. Indeed, my dear friend, you was too good for him : I always told you so, but you rejected my counsels. One of the happiest effects of friendship, is, that mutual liberty of giving and receiving advice with freedom, even when it appears necessary not to pursue the counsel *given*, because one loves and esteems the principle from which it proceeds.

Friendship between women, the men look upon as a chimera, a non-entity, grudging us even the name, which is all that they retain of it. Shakespeare is the only poet, I recollect, who has delineated the character of a female friend : in Celia and Rosalind. I make no doubt but he would have favoured us with many

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more such in his works; but at the time Shakespeare wrote, he was not unap-
 prized to what a disadvantage his females
 must appear, under the circumstance of
 being represented by men; which cus-
 tom continued till the reign of William
 III. and to this consideration we may
 reasonably attribute the scarcity of wo-
 men in most of his pieces. But to
 return from this digression—A steady
 friendship affords a moral assurance of
 the virtue of both the parties, because
 no other league could render the union
 permanent. May not the energy of
 friendship be considered, in some sort,
 as one proof of the immortality of the
 soul, of its immateriality at least; as it
 is an expansion of the mind, which en-
 deavours to enlarge itself beyond the
 narrow bounds of its own mansion? It
 has none of the perturbations of love, of
 am-

LETTER XIV. 5

ambition, of avarice in it, which have self ultimately for their object.

Like music, pure, the joy without alloy,
Whose every rapture, is tranquility.

As things have happened, it is better, to be sure, you did not leave your husband. Human prudence is often deceived; our knowledge is confined; we see, and judge badly. Therefore when things appear desperate, and events turn out contrary to our hopes and expectations, it is proper to be resigned to the will of Providence: that which appears to us as an evil, may possibly prove a fortunate event. In regard to your sentiments concerning education in a convent; respecting the time it affords for reflection, &c. I highly approve of, if girls do not go there until they are

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twelve or thirteen years of age; but if sooner, it is doubtful whether, at that early age, they would have recourse to this expedient, to divert the time: I question very much, even then, if it is by means of dry and formal precepts, those false and extravagant notions inculcated in convents, that a young woman is insensibly prepared to make a proper figure in life, and to discharge the duties of a wife, and a mother. I think those parents are much to blame, who keep their children so much out of company that they lose all relish for it; and are in a perfect flutter if they happen to see a strange face. A young lady not early formed for habitual elegance, betrays the defects of her education by an unnecessary anxiety of behaviour; which often renders her troublesome by ill-timed civility; and this

is

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is the great *pierre d'achopement*, they generally fall into. Excessive complaisance, is no less disagreeable than downright rusticity. By living very retired, their ideas must be necessarily confined; they can acquire but little knowledge of the world, and must retain long that perilous ignorance of vice, which, keeping suspicion at a distance, induces us to judge of others by ourselves; and makes us consider every one, without distinction, as disposed to serve and oblige us. If girls were to pass their days in retirement, or among virtuous people only, and were absolutely beyond the power of being led astray, it would be advisable to leave them ignorant of the passions, which, probably, they would never experience; but the world, such as it is at present, abounding with precipices, dangers, and rocks, it is necessary

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to arm them against these perils; and for this end, nothing is more proper than to shew them by examples, what miseries violent passions produce: this may be done without tainting in the least the purity of their minds. I approve much of your plan, in regard to bringing your daughters up frugally; nor do I confine it to your situation, but extend it to all others. One who in infancy is left to be governed by her own caprice, I am apt to believe, will scarcely submit to reason in her more advanced years: I never blame a lady so much for her humours, as her mother, for not having corrected them. The folly, and depravity (I speak in general) of the men, and the unlucky *accidents* that occur in life, furnishes so many occasions to women for the exercise of patience and submission, that they can
never

never expect to live with any peace or comfort, who will not prepare themselves against them. The only precaution a tender mother can take in her daughter's education, is to prepare her mind for all events, and accidents, she is liable to meet with in a life sentenced to be a scene of sorrow. But in place of this, softness and delicacy is a fault which women are generally bred up with, and what a great many ladies pique themselves upon: but so educated, they are sure to create in the future conduct of their lives, much uneasiness and trouble to themselves, and all about them: they are rendered incapable ever afterwards of a firm and regular conduct, and so must fall necessarily into many extravagancies. Parents have much to answer for, who flatter and bring up their children with prospects
of

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of constant delight; and by that means too frequently destroy in their minds the seeds of fortitude and virtue, which should support them in the hours of anguish.—But this may be carried too far; your daughters are handsome, and their merit too conspicuous, to escape admiration, even in this mercenary age.

Now, my dear friend, as the *Princesse de Lynne* is to pass through *Liege*, in her way from *Spa*; I must request that you will send me my *Lucy*. Be assured I shall take the same care of her as of my own girls.

As to the unjust censure you met with, my dear friend, it was unavoidable. To suffer abuse, is a tax merit generally pays for its superiority. If we see any person act with the most exact integrity in every respect but one, surely we are unjust, if we do not seek for some reason

son

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son for that deficiency, which may reconcile it to their general conduct. Let us never forget it is a kind of slander to trust rumour.

Grasp the whole world, of reason, life, and sense,
In one close system of benevolence :

Happier, as tender, in whate'er degree,
And height of bliss, but height of charity.

POPE'S Essay on Man.

A scandalous story, is like a ball of snow, it still increases as it goes along; every body adds or alters something; till at last the parents scarce know their own child. Rigid moralists, in their retirement from the world, condemn at their leisure the conduct of others; though they themselves, in the same situation, would most probably, have acted in a more exceptionable manner. But you treat that matter as it deserves. It is the work of reason and religion to fortify
the

the mind against the impression of those evils : and that mind which is furnished with true notions of things, with a rational and solid faith, with steady and well-grounded hopes, may bear the impetuous shock of all these waves and storms, calm and unmoved.—Nay, I may boldly affirm, not only that virtue checks and controuls these evils, blunts their edge, and abates their force ; but, what is more, that their natural strength, their own proper force, is weak and contemptible, unless our own passions be combined against us. Our pride must aid our enemy, to render his affront provoking : as our covetousness and ambition must add force to the arrows of fortune, before they can give any painful wound to the heart. I am not surprised, at your thinking Lady Filmer too much upon *stilts*, in her letters to Sir James Bruce

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Bruce—she meant to be so : she had high ideas of our prerogatives, and did not *lessen them* upon that occasion. But you must be charmed with the justness and propriety of her own actions, in every circumstance of her life, which you will find in the *family narrative*. I own, that I am rather surpris'd at your disapproving of learning in women, and of your saying that we derive advantages from our education, which is denied the men. As I have always considered this subject in another point of view, I must beg you will give me your reasons for this allegation. I acknowledge myself, that I am very far from thinking that education is *all and all*. Habits are acquired certainly by mixing with the world : nay, the mind acquires new ideas from the behaviour of others : but though experience may teach us something,

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thing, it can never eradicate the natural disposition. In that respect we all are, I apprehend, as we were born, nor can we be modelled by education. The human mind is frequently retouched, but the ground-work is still the same. —I am an instance of this myself: want of education has undoubtedly made me deficient in knowledge, accomplishments, &c. but the worst examples did not corrupt my heart. I am ever,

my dear friend,

yours affectionately,

ELIZA DE CRUI.

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L E T T E R XV.

From Mrs. PIERPONT to the Duchefs
DE CRUI.

DEAR MADAM,

I Return your Highness many thanks
for all your goodness to me, and
mine : and for the honour you have done
my daughter, in inviting her to pass
some time with you at Brussels. I was
unwilling to mortify her, by a refusal of
what I know will make her very hap-
py ; yet, my dearest friend, I must re-
quest her visit may be very short ; and
that your Highness will not by over-in-
dulgence, inspire her with a taste for
pleasures which as, in our situation, she
has no chance to enjoy, she might after-
wards

wards regret. Seneca says, " That there is no difference betwixt possessing a thing and not desiring it : "

They cannot want, who wish not to have more :
Whoever said an Anchorite was poor.

Nature makes us poor only when we want necessaries; but *custom* gives the name of poverty to the want of superfluities. Providence gives that in greatest plenty, which the condition of life makes of the greatest use : and nothing is penuriously imported, or placed far from the reach of man, of which a more liberal distribution would make him happier. The real world has its bounds; the imaginary world is infinite. Being unable to enlarge the one, let us contract the other; for it is only from their difference, that most of the troubles arise, which make us so unhappy. Is it not there-

therefore necessary, my dear friend, to qualify girls for true frugality without narrowness of mind, and to make them see, of all the expences the world run into, how few are necessary to happiness. To deprive them of all temptations to purchase pleasures, it is proper to instruct and accustom them only to find it in themselves; and by the various accomplishments bestowed on them, prevent that vacuity of mind, which leads people to seek external amusements. The day will then not be sufficient for their employments; consequently they will not be induced to trifle their time away. With this view, it has been my plan to inspire my girls with a relish for such pleasures as will be *within their reach*, and never cloy in the possession. The right employment of time is a

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valuable lesson: the woman who has been taught it, will seldom be troubled with vapours, and low spirits: the poet says,

'Tis the great art of life to manage well
The restless mind. For ever on pursuit
Of knowledge bent, it starves the grosser powers:
Quite unemploy'd, against its own repose
It turns the edge.

ARMSTRONG.

Your Highness does my girl honour, in thinking her attractions are such as may possibly procure her a good match, while under your patronage. In a former letter I explained myself on this head. Such a circumstance is not out of the course of common events; but I have no right to expect it. In almost every thing, we must act upon probabilities; and one exception out of many ought never to de-

determine us. Let us take our rules, my dear madam, from plain common sense. How often do we see people, whose whole happiness is destroyed by change of place? Virtue is too often merely local. As in some situations, the air affects the health of the *body*; so in others, bad example and its influence poison the *mind*. They who contract an ambitious intimacy with those that are above them in circumstances, though not by birth, are always forced upon disadvantageous comparisons of their condition with others; and seldom return from gay assemblies, and magnificent apartments, but they are discontented, and arraign Providence, for placing them in such indigence.

Men in general, only judge by comparison. The Laplander thinks himself happy in his frozen climate, because he

has no idea of any other advantages than those which he and his countrymen possess.

I flatter myself your Highness will subscribe to the justness of this reasoning. You ask of me, why I did not separate myself from Mr. Pierpont? I shall now answer that question, and with as much sincerity and truth, as if I were speaking to Heaven, from whom no secrets are hid. It is my principle, that where duty is reciprocal, the failure of it in the one party, acquits not the other for a failure in his. From this principle, with the hopes of reclaiming Mr. Pierpont, the principal reasons of my conduct are to be drawn. When I found the latter was impossible, I still thought my presence might keep him in some bounds. I must likewise own to you, that as my health was impaired, and my spirits weakened, on account of some disagree-

disagreeable things I had met with in consequence of my husband's imprudence, I had not courage to encounter what I know would have been said by the malevolent, had I separated myself from him: while his want of veracity convinced me, that had I taken this step, there is nothing malice could have invented but he would have propagated to my prejudice; which coming from him, must inevitably have hurt my reputation; and, as I have girls to introduce into life, it must to them have been an irreparable injury. *A mother in dishonour is a reproach to her children**. It is not enough to be really virtuous, a woman ought to have the reputation of it; without that reputation, her virtue is of no use to society. I shall not easily for-

* Ecclesiasticus, chap. iii. ver. 11.

get a conversation that happened once at the Prince de L——'s; he was expatiating with his usual gallantry to Madame le Cas, who was then the idol of his affections: he expected an amusement from his eloquence, nearly similar to that which an artful juggler gives us, when he makes us believe that we see what we do not, without, at the same time, letting an observing man perceive so much of his art, as to give him the least suspicion that he is deceived. You permitted him to run on: when he was gone, you said to Madame le Cas, “ I suspect not, madam, that your sentiments should want any thing of the purity, the generosity, required in the idea of a friendship like that the Prince talked of—yet let me ask you one thing; would not the example of such an attachment subsisting betwixt you and a
man,

man, *who has professed himself your admirer* — mislead delicate, and less guarded minds, into allowances dangerous to them; and subject souls less great than yours, to jealousies, whether warrantable or not, of friendships that should plead your's for a precedent?—But to return from this digression. A woman separated from her husband, must either be pitied or blamed: if she is pitied, that pity reflects dishonour upon the person most nearly connected with her, and upon her own judgment in suffering that connection to take place. If she is blamed, and conscious that censure is just, how insupportably disagreeable must her reflection be? Had not a woman better yield in many things; and put up with a thousand inconveniences privately, rather than throw herself upon the cold un pitying world?

Besides, the practice of any virtue, is a kind of mental exercise, and serves to maintain the health and vigor of the soul. I considered all these points, as it is every one's duty, whatever situation they wish to propose to themselves, to acquire a clear and distinct idea of the inconveniencies attending it. We should hold ourselves always in readiness, to give an exact account of all our actions; and, in every circumstance of our lives, before we yield to the suggestions of our own hearts, we should ask ourselves, *what answer we should make, were we asked the motives that determined us?* I, at the same time, am highly sensible, that it by no means follows we acted from reason, *because good reasons can be produced for what we did:* as we too often act *first*, and reason only *afterwards*.

Your

Your Highness's reflections on the insufficiency of human wisdom, are very just. We are short-sighted creatures; but if we place our whole confidence in God, and pray to him to enable us to act a part, which will give us peace on reflection; I believe our prayers will be answered. As I have already wrote you so long a letter, I must defer answering the last part of your's till the next post.

I ever am, dear Madam,

you Highness's obliged,

and affectionate friend,

ANNA PIERPONT.

LET-

L E T T E R X V I .

From the Same, to the Same.

DEAR MADAM,

YOUR Highness desires me to acquaint you, in what respect I think our sex enjoy greater advantages than men, from our education.

There are many things, which, upon a slight and transient inspection, carry the appearance of absurdity, but may be reconciled upon a closer examination. And it will upon reflection, appear to your Highness, to be an assertion not entirely groundless, when we consider, that by learning, is generally meant the having a knowledge of the ancient languages, that is, of *words* and *grammatical* rules,

rules, which frequently have but a very slender connection with the *objects* and *ideas* they are meant to convey.

Quintillian, speaking of a pedant, who taught his scholars to be obscure, said he used to cry out, “ That is excellent, I do not understand one word of it.” One may spend whole days with pleasure in the company of a man, whose natural genius has been cultivated and improved, and but a very small time with one who is a mere scholar. One’s imagination cannot be always on the stretch to such exalted objects; it must stop to rest itself, and return to its native simplicity: and it happens unluckily to some of them, that the anti-chambers to the *great*, differ from the road to *Parnassus*. To succeed in life, a man must furnish himself with a genteel address, in place of Greek and Latin; and instead

stead of incessantly courting the *Muses*, he should sometimes sacrifice to the *Graces*. Even Dr. Samuel Johnson, in his preface to his Dictionary, acquaints us, that he is not yet so lost in lexicography, as to forget, “ That words are the daughters of earth, and that things are the sons of Heaven.” There is a great respect, undoubtedly, due to linguists ; as we owe to them the translation of the sacred books. But it is a truth, that the attention paid to languages, has too generally swallowed up most other more important considerations : infomuch, that sound morals, and good breeding, are obliged to give way to that which is only of moment, as it promotes, and serves for a conveyance to those. Whatever is universally necessary, has been granted to mankind on easy terms. Our knowledge is de-
rived

rived from the cōpious source of our senses and reason; our minds are filled with ideas that spring, not from *books*, but thought; our principles are consistent, because deduced in a regular series from each other, and not scraps of different systems, gleaned from the works of others, and huddled together without examining their congruity. Where is the scholar whose opinion is *wholly his own*? And where is the genius, whom we wish to have known *the opinion of others*? Are we sure that Shakespeare would have been so much admired, had he been a deep scholar? Do we not then derive advantages from the very defects of our education? Do not our minds operate with more freedom, and with the genuine simplicity of uncorrupted nature?

They

They need no muse, who can invoke their heart.

We are not fettered, like men, by principles, nor are our minds warped by systems, nor confined to the particular modes of thinking, that prevail in colleges and schools. I take nature to be the great book of universal learning; which, whoever reads with most intelligence, will be the most knowing, and the most learned of whatever sex. The peasant who enjoys the beauty of the tulip, is equally delighted with the philosopher, though he knows not the rays from which the colours are derived; and plants grow with the same luxuriance, whether we suppose earth or water the parent of vegetation. The boy who strikes a ball with his racket, is as certain where it will be driven by the blow, as if he was more perfectly

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conversant in the dispute about matter and motion : and the light of the sun is equally beneficial to him whose eyes tell him that it moves, as to him whose reason persuades him that it stands still. In knowledge, those parts are most easy which are generally necessary. The intercourse of society is maintained without the elegancies of language. Figures, criticisms, and refinements, are the works of those, who by their real, or supposed parts, wish to dazzle mankind. A certain man, discoursing upon a seasonable topic, before the Ephori, was more circumstantial than was necessary ; upon which Anaxandrias replied, “ Stranger, you treat a necessary subject, in an unnecessary manner.” The commerce of the world is carried on by easy methods of computation : subtilty and study, are invented merely to puzzle ; and
cal-

calculations are extended to shew the skill of the calculator. Nature always does her part; she has afforded a multiplicity of objects to the meditation of every person that can behold and think: and what she has made the most agreeable exercise of our minds, reason may convert to the most useful. Now, if we consult this guide, I am apt to imagine, we shall be far from thinking many acquirements necessary, which the men lose time upon: we shall neither read, nor study to indulge our indolence; nor to gratify our vanity; nor content ourselves, like them, with being grammarians and critics: far less, affect the paltry praise of becoming great scholars, at the expence of being bewildered all our lives in the dark mazes of antiquity. But, by applying ourselves to nature *only*, we shall
not

not waste our time to so little purpose, as those do, who, calling themselves philosophers, mispend their own lives in the pursuit of mean trifles, existing only in their own subtle imaginations. We shall find more useful employments for our researches, than those of determining the nature of space; or debating whether matter be, or be not, infinitely divisible? whether it have any existence but in the mind? whether there be any mechanical cause of gravitation? whether eternal duration, necessarily implies a substance of which it is a property? With a thousand other questions, of a yet more useless nature, that have been eagerly canvassed in the schools.

Let us examine our education, and observe wherein it falls short of the men's; and how the defects *may* be, and *are* generally, supplied. In our tender years

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they

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they are the same; for after children can talk, boys and girls are promiscuously taught to read by the same persons, and at the same time. At the age of six, or seven years, they begin to be separated, and the boys in general are sent to the grammar-school, and the girls to boarding-schools, in which case, the latter are instructed in dancing, music, drawing, the French and Italian languages, and other accomplishments, according to the humour and ability of the parents, or genius and inclination of the children. Here then lies the principal defect, that we are only taught French, or perhaps Italian, which is now as common among women of fashion, as men: whereas the men, by means of their education, (it being extended to the acquirement of the Roman and Greek languages,) are said to have a greater field for their
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imaginations to rove in, and their minds
 in consequence will be enlarged. It be-
 ing generally allowed, that our know-
 ledge is in proportion to our ideas; and
 that the more complex they are, the
 greater is the variety of positions in
 which they may be employed. I confess
 however, that after much reflection, and
 much enquiry, I am yet at a loss to dis-
 cover the advantages they derive from
 it—It hurts a mind of true and original
 capabilities, by preventing the excur-
 sions of a vigorous understanding, as
 they are kept in a beaten track: and per-
 petuates error, by imposing received opi-
 nions upon those, who, if they had be-
 gun the enquiry themselves, would have
 discovered truths, and have been more
 impressed by them than by considering
 them only as lessons: and sometimes it
 fixes the attention to subjects which are

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not suited to that particular genius, and turn of mind, which nature would have exerted upon some other, the object of her own choice. Does it not, by loading the memory, restrain imagination: and by multiplying precepts, anticipate judgment? Is it not as ridiculous, for a man to account himself more learned than another, if he hath no greater extent of knowledge, because he is versed in languages; as it would be, for an old man to assert that his eyes were better than those of a young one, because he is assisted by spectacles, which the other is not. —Yet it is reckoned nothing, for a man to be well versed in the modern philosophy, astronomy, geometry, and algebra, to understand Italian, French, Spanish, High-Dutch, with the other European languages; and to be well acquainted with the modern history of all
these

these countries. He will not be allowed to be learned with these only : it will be granted that he is intelligent, a good naturalist, a great mathematician, or poet : but some emphatic shrugs, or significant look, will express, *that these are little*, if he be no scholar.

Do they not in this manner, invert the true order of things, and ascribe that merit to the knowledge of *words*, which properly belong to *things*?

It is a groundless opinion, that because women are ignorant of the dead languages, they are also uninformed of the subjects and sense which they contain ! Can it be supposed, that Wisdom only speaks to her disciples in Greek, Latin, Hebrew, and other languages of antiquity ? In order to consider whether this is the case or not, let it be supposed that we are only instructed in our own

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language; and then let us enquire, whether that disadvantage be so great in fact as it is supposed? Whoever has sense, will understand whatever is wrote in his own language, although he is entirely ignorant of all others; with an exception only of the technical terms of science. Shakespeare is a proof, that a man without the knowledge of the learned languages, may understand his own. It is not necessary women should be very learned: but in order to be useful members to society, happy in ourselves, or agreeable to others, all our actions should proceed from fixed principles: we should think pertinently, and express our thoughts properly on every subject. A woman of understanding, will always consider the propriety of adapting her conversation to time and place. The Italians, a people
as

as delicate and refined in their conversation as any in the world, have a maxim, that nothing relative to our neighbour, to business, or to ourselves, ought to be the subject of our discourse in mixed companies. The reason of these restrictions are so plain, that it is needless to take notice of them. To these, (will your Highness pardon my presumption, in differing with Lady Filmer) to add abstruse speculations, and political inquiries; these being disquisitions which require much reading and consideration, and in which our sex is seldom concerned, are improper to be detailed by us? Nor, by these limitations, are our thoughts and conversation restrained to a narrow compass; there still remain sufficient subjects for our discoursing upon; such as all parts of polite literature, more

particularly dramatic poesy, all subjects in which characters are displayed, and all others wherein the feelings of the heart are more interested than the powers of the understanding. History, as far as it relates to different æras; treatises, and essays on moral subjects; those of taste, of decorum, of art, and humour; in short, of all parts of literature that are not deemed scientific, and appropriated to the study of the men: for though we may not think so profoundly, we may discern with as much precision; and if we want strength of conception, refinement and delicacy amply compensate the loss of it: and where the sentimental enters much into the subject, may it not be truly said, that the female heart is naturally more in unison, and responsive to such touches, than that of the other sex. If
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the firmness of the men's minds are *greater*, their compassion is certainly *less*: for it is ever found, that as the softest metals are most easily dissolved, so the tenderest minds soonest melt with pity. Are there not then, some species of poetry, in which our sex, from their peculiar sensibility, seem qualified to excel in: where the tender interests of the heart are the subject?—In the elegant complainings of elegy, and the simplicity of pastoral imagery, do not women appear to have a superiority? and now, permit me to ask your Highness, what necessity there can be of knowing any language besides our own, to enable us to talk or write with propriety and discernment upon any of the preceding topics? May we not be somewhat confident, that an ingenious person may make a very considerable progress in
most

most parts of literature and knowledge, by the assistance of English only? Although rather foreign to the subject, I cannot help here also mentioning, that Newton admits a very moderate share of mathematical knowledge to be sufficient to enable any one perfectly to comprehend and judge of his philosophy.—But to return: by the acquirement of various languages, we only get possession of various keys to the same lock; either of which open the door that admits to the recesses of knowledge and art. And as they who have been masters of those treasures, have generously imparted the knowledge of what they contain, by elegant and just translations; are we not placed in a situation of judging of the subjects, without the previous loss of time, which would be inevitably spent in learning the *words*, before
fore

fore we can acquire the *ideas*, which they convey in the originals. In consequence of this unimportant acquirement of sounds, a boy at seventeen or eighteen years of age, is to begin his alphabet of *sense*, and is then no further advanced than a girl at nine or ten. And thus also are their healths sacrificed, by the body being deprived of its requisite exercise; the temper hurt by frequent contradictions, and the vigour of the mind impaired by the overstraining it. The poet finely says,

To study evermore is overshot;
While it doth study to have what it would,
It doth forget to do the thing it should;
And when it hath the thing it hunteth most,
'Tis even, as towns with fire, so won, so lost.

It cannot be denied, that too much of their time is engaged in things less advantageous than those in which we are
em-

employed. If it is true, that our early impressions are the most durable; nothing can be less disputable, than that young minds ought to be impressed with other ideas than tenses, nouns, and verbs: a perfect knowledge of which requires a seven years application. If we consider our life, according to the sentiments of my admired author †, we should learn to value seven years at a greater rate than we do at present. “In life, says he, is not to be counted the ignorance of infancy, or the imbecillity of age.—We are long before we are able to think, and we soon cease from the power of acting. The true period of existence, may be reasonably estimated at forty years;” of which, seven years is more than the sixth part, and which the wisdom of man hath set apart, in the education of

† Author of the Prince of Abyssinia.

youth,

youth, for learning those *words*, which they are daily forgetting all the rest of their lives. Instead of *numbering their days, that they may apply their hearts unto wisdom*. Is not this a more profitable arithmetic, than all the algebra they can acquire? May I presume a little further, even to regret that it requires some years in men to lose the absurd conceptions which have taken possession of them in the school-days of puerility. For this partiality to languages, I can discover but one specious reason; which, is that about two hundred years ago, all the remains of learning were in the hands of the school-men: they would suffer none to be reputed learned, that were not deeply engaged in those intricate vexatious, and unintelligible subjects, for which they contended with so much
vehe-

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vehemence; or at least, who were not acquainted with Plato and Aristotle, and their commentators: from whence the sophistry and subtleties of schools at that time were derived. Even the philosophical and religious controversies, for the last three or four hundred years, have turned much more upon words and names, unascertained, and misunderstood, than upon things fairly stated.

The ideas then, which they there imbibe, are (too often) attended with the worst consequences to them: and the bad effects of these errors, are increased by there being so many contradictory religions upon earth, that sensible men, thinking there can be but one true, and equally conscious they want discernment to discover it, are often tempted, in mat-
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ters of religion, to reject every thing which reason alone could not discover.

If any one is yet unsatisfied with the evidences of the christian religion, which flourishes in despite of the oppositions of the ignorant; I would advise him to read the following books, Pere Bassier, *sur les premier Principes de la Verité*; or *La Verité*, translated by Pere Bouhours into French, from the Italian of the Marquis de Pianessa; or Dr. Beattie's excellent Essay on Truth. Beattie is a name of which Scotland may boast with the best founded pride, if indeed such a man is not rather to be deemed what Voltaire says of Newton, "the property of all nations." Can any thing be wrote with more vivacity and argument, or more seasonably, in this juncture of apostacy from the christian religion! Those works

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works have laid the axe to the root of these dangerous doctrines; and must be read with a secret gratitude to the authors, as being benefactors to mankind, in endeavouring to secure their highest interest.

In all matters of religion, a desire of knowing our duty, should be the motive *alone* of *our* enquiries: and in all things of common life, reason ought to direct us. And although sometimes, in the most judicious conduct we may err, yet if we follow this plan, our errors will be few; and since a perfect rectitude is beyond the power of humanity, that which approaches the nearest, is exaltation sufficient, both for character and felicity.

I now ask your Highness pardon, for taking up so much of your time in reading this long, tiresome, and ill-wrote
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letter. I am not ignorant, that you think correctness, and elegance of style, are as necessary to set off the plainest truths, as neatness of dress, and politeness of manners, are to recommend the most beautiful person; a slovenly negligence or tawdry affectation, being no less disgusting in the one than in the other. Being therefore conscious of my want of capacity, if a deficiency in friendship did not appear to me more culpable than a transgression in point of prudence, I should have excused myself from this attempt. But I revive, when I recollect, that the persons who are most severe with respect to themselves, are the most indulgent to others.

I remain, dear Madam,
your Highness's obliged,
and affectionate friend,

ANNA PIERPONT.

L E T T E R XVII.

From the Duchefs DE CRUI, to Mrs.
PIERPONT.

DEAR MADAM,

I Cannot fufficiently exprefs my admiration of your laft letter; yet as I cannot altogether be of your opinion, I fhall take the liberty of differing from you on fome points. To begin then—Can it be denied, that the deftination of our fex is fo uncertain that we are bred up at random; and the fudden tranfitions of good or bad fortune, which daily happen to women, demand the greateft philofophy and good fenfe on their part, to fustain a propriety of behaviour, under fuch various circumftances, as require the moft oppofite qualifications: rendering what is
praise-

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praise-worthy in one situation, a defect in another, and *vice versa*. Juvenal says,

For the same fact we've often known,
One mount the cart, another mount the throne.

The same woman's conduct will appear in a very different point of view, under opposite circumstances. There sometimes wants a stroke of fortune to discover numberless latent good or bad qualities, which would otherwise have been concealed; as words wrote with a certain liquor, appear only when applied to the fire.

It has been observed, that the Lacedæmonians were lions at Sparta, and monkeys at Ephesus *. Now I am convinced you will agree with me, that if men are found inconsistent, or irregu-

* Epict. lib. i.

lar in their conduct, there are much fewer excuses to be offered for them, than for women, both on account of their superior information, and because they are generally trained up from their infancy with a view to the plan of life they are destined to be in: ten years, at least, are devoted to the task of instructing them to observe, to perceive, to judge; they possess every thing, they enjoy every thing; the world seems made for them alone. On the contrary, a girl is condemned to silence, amidst visitors, and seems not to be one of the company: she is hardly ever spoke to; or if she is, seldom is permitted to give an answer: so that her disposition and understanding are utterly unknown. Whereas, relations are at the utmost pains to adapt the profession to the respective geniuses of the boys; their
ideas,

ideas, conduct, and views, have been directed to one object to which they are insensibly familiarised. Does not this then require from them a less degree of application, and does not habit confirm their steadiness? Thus men are elevated, when the women are obliged to exalt themselves. And if, at the age of twenty-five, a woman arrives, by the help of her own reflections, to a small degree of knowledge, it is extraordinary: and after the difficult study of others and herself, it is equally so to discover that she is formed for acquiring that knowledge, and practising those virtues, which are undoubtedly common to both sexes. But how many obstacles has she to surmount, in the pursuit of this difficult study? A thousand objects divert her pursuit; and the prejudice of the men, against women of any distinguished

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parts, is truly disgusting; but let us never forget, that the true foundation of action is the truth and rectitude of that action, and the foundation of truth and rectitude is the eternal perfection and will of the divine nature,—What we do should be the result of reason, not proceeding from the desire of praise; because it is right, not because it is commendable; always considering that wisdom, not vanity, ought to determine our conduct. We are to act for the sake of truth, in order to please God; not for the sake of applause, in order to please man.

A woman who has cultivated her understanding, and improved her mind, will govern herself according to the everlasting rules of reason and good sense, and will have something so inexpressibly graceful in all her actions, that every circumstance will become her.

her. The change of persons and things around, will not alter her conduct; she will feel disinterested amidst the bustle of trivial occurrences, in which the multitude are engaged, and with which they are distracted: because the greatest purpose in her life, is to maintain an indifference both to the world and all its enjoyments. If we have understandings capable of every judicious observation, and hearts susceptible of every good impression, it will lead us to reflect, that to live well, we must oppose nature to law, reason to passion, and resolution to misfortune: that we must set bounds to our zeal by discretion, to error by truth, and to passion by reason. Can it then be unnecessary for us to acquire that degree of knowledge, which may guide, inspire, and confirm us in our passage through every period

of human life with equal satisfaction and complacency? and to prepare us for misfortunes, and make us fit for encountering the troubles of life?

How should her actions be right, who hath no established rule of life? Nothing can be just, which proceedeth not from reason. There can be no permanency in virtue that is not seated in the mind. Even if our judgments should be erroneous; to be able to justify ourselves to ourselves, must console us, in every event of life, by having recourse to the principles of our determination: whereas, if we make the praise or blame of others the rule of our conduct, we shall be distracted by a boundless variety of irreconcilable judgments. The fable of the father, son, and ass, will sufficiently illustrate this subject. We should beware of irresolution in the intent of our

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actions, and of instability in the execution of them : so shall we triumph over the two great weaknesses of nature. Let us establish our hearts in that which is right, and there know that the greatest of human praise is to be immutable. How many people are there, who have a kind of neutral disposition, which inclines not either to virtue or vice, with sufficient strength to animate an invariable pursuit of either, but may be drawn alternately to each, by adding to the opposition on the contrary side. If such act honourably, it is more owing to a happy concurrence of circumstances, than to their own resolution. In consequence of this, it is not until they have been led into a thousand mistakes in matters the most essential, that they can be induced to apply a remedy to the evils with which they are oppressed. It is then

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then they begin to conceive, and acknowledge the most palpable truths, which from their simplicity commonly escape vulgar minds, accustomed to receive impressions without distinction, and to be determined by the opinions of others, rather than by the result of their own examination : does it not proceed from this, that women, in general, are such trifling characters? I am very far from wishing a woman to set up her understanding in competition with her husband's. But a rational being, as an heir of eternity, I would have her, in things of consequence, think for herself : while she should sacrifice her inclinations in all things of a trifling or frivolous nature, to correspond to his humour or taste. But you will find my sentiments on the duty of wives to their husbands, in my future letters, in consequence of
your

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your question, what produces so many unhappy marriages?

I have always been averse to the common arbitrary practice of enslaving children to the authority of prejudices, and have been attentive to put my daughters into the train of an early exercise of their reasoning faculties; without the conviction of which, I have cautioned them against receiving implicitly every opinion: accustoming them to inquire into the causes of their judgment of things; and leading them to truth by the way of examination: thus teaching them to think for themselves, and not to let their reason lie dormant, or to carry it about them, as people commonly do in high life, like a lame arm in a sling, lest it should hurt them to use it. But alas! my dear friend, after all my maternal cares, all my anxious tenderness, and
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fond hopes of rendering these precious pledges, of the most happy and perfect union, virtuous, respectable, and accomplished, it is a melancholy reflection how I may be deceived, and how much I may have even contributed to their misery, from my ignorance of their destination in life. Is it not possible, from having refined their ideas too much for their future circumstances, (if they should happen to marry into a worse situation than that they have been bred up in), they may be haunted, as it were, with an evil genius, by certain ideas of the coarse, the low, the vulgar, and the irregular, which will accompany them in all the natural pleasures of life; and render them incapable of enjoying any thing, and consequently make their days one constant scene of mortifying occurrences. In such a state, it conduces
far

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far more to our ease, not to have too much refined our ideas ; but a well instructed mind in what relates to religion and ourselves, will furnish them with consolations that will never fail them, but on the contrary, inspire respect in those we are connected with. It is universally allowed, that the progress of vegetation is not more certain than the growth of habit, nor the power of attraction more firmly proved than the influence of example. Mankind do not expect to find the gravity of a Spaniard in a Frenchman, or to meet in the Frenchman the heaviness of mind, or indefatigable industry of the German ; they are not disappointed when the gross and heavy disposition of a Dutchman does not unfold itself in the politeness, acuteness, and accuracy of wit, of an Italian ; or when they do not meet the

French

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French politesse in John Bull; they are sensible that our separation from the continent, give us peculiarities which other nations want. Now, although the men affect to despise the understandings of women, they expect them to conform themselves to circumstances of time and place, seldom making any allowances for, or reflecting how essentially these may differ from those they have been accustomed to in their infancy: when it will, perhaps, require great recollection of our situation, to avoid those vices which resemble virtues, and which would have been really such in opposite circumstances. Though the desire of compliance may be innate in women, yet the difficulty of a sudden conformance must be acknowledged, as we do not pretend to have the power of Proteus. But it is in vain for a woman

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to plead, I was bred up in elegance and splendour, I am perfectly alive to the finer impressions of taste and—Fool! interrupts a husband in an inferior station of life, what have you or I to do with taste? go to the market, prove your judgment in a good penny-worth; your proper taste ought to lie in distinguishing the best provision of the shambles, and your delicacies ought to be confined to that of selecting the best of those dainties which supply the table!

Another lady, raised from depressed circumstances, which have tintured her mind with a degree of melancholy, inured her to reflection, and ideas of the folly of the world; whose observations in life, hath enabled her to distinguish between *customs* which are adopted by caprice and folly, and those *duties* which are the genuine offspring
of

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of reason and religion; she reflects that *custom* can be no sufficient argument for any thing, unless it is supported by reason, as vice or irregularity have no right to prescription. As laws are not abrogated by being infringed, she therefore regrets to her husband, the obligation she is under of passing her time in such frivolous pursuits as fashion dictate: and submits it to him, if there can be a necessity for conforming to manners which her reason disapproves, though the fashion of the world may seem to authorise her *practice*. If there is a necessity for people in high life, or those of great fortune, to conform to folly, what are the advantages of reason? The husband, astonished at her declining the participation of what alone constitutes his supreme felicity, from that instant despises her; as when a want of sympathy of sentiment prevents our dis-

discovering similar principles in ourselves, we are too often tempted unphilosophically to deny their existence in others; and we are always apt to suppose the joys or sorrows of others proceed from the same cause as our own. You may remember King Lear asks Tom, “have his children brought him to this?” Her husband treats her ever after as an idiot, and states all her refusals to the vulgar, low ideas she had contracted in her infancy: but it does not rest here—He informs her, that he expects her obedience and compliance with his humours, in return for the obligations she lies under to him; that he expects her to take his ton; indulge what in her wisdom, she may think his foibles; and countenance what she may judge his errors. As you must know who I mean, you will naturally think

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with me, that this man never reflects ; that the lover who marries his mistress only because he cannot gain her upon easier terms, has just as much generosity as a highwayman who leaves a traveller in possession of his money, because he is not able to take it from him. Allow me to intrude a little further upon your patience, by stating another case.

A young lady is induced, from prudential reasons of her parents, to marry a man in his grand climacteric. Can it be denied, that if she is prudent, in the bloom of beauty, liveliness of youth, and giddiness of affluence, she will act as if she did not possess these superior advantages ; but will anticipate age, to conform herself to her husband ; and to render herself respectable to the world, by securing herself against its malevolence. As the policy of different kingdoms enacts
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sumptuary laws, adapted to the situation and present commerce of the state, in like manner it becomes necessary for a woman to make a new *code* of *laws* for herself, when she is raised from inferiority to rank, or opulence; or descends from a state of grandeur to a middling situation of life; when she emerges from misery to happiness, or sinks from supreme felicity to wretchedness! Adversity and prosperity are the two touch-stones of the soul; but I have observed a greater number of people bear up with fortitude under severe afflictions, than I have known to support sudden good fortune with moderation.

When men emerge from obscurity to an elevated situation in life, we often see how giddy and forgetful of their origin they soon become. If we survey one of them supporting himself with

dignity and fortitude under misfortunes, we are amazed; and exclaim, that the vicissitudes of his fortune interest our pity as much as his magnanimity excites our admiration! Thus men receive the suffrage of the world; but let it be remembered, that there is nothing great in bearing misfortunes with firmness, when it attracts general observation and applause. Men, under such circumstances, will act bravely, from motives of vanity; but she who can support herself under adversity; who, without friends to encourage, acquaintances to pity, or even hope to alleviate her misfortunes, can behave with tranquility, and steady calmness, is truly great.

Such is the fate of many women, born in elevated stations, and who, from accidental occurrences, are placed in situations unworthy of them; which they fill
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by accommodating their dispositions to their circumstances, in the humblest acts of unremitted assiduity, and the most diligent attention to the minuter duties; who learn to be satisfied with the consciousness of acting right, and look with unconcerned indifference on the reception of every unsuccessful attempt to please; being sensible of the justness of Mr. Addison's remark, " That vice is often covered by wealth, and virtue by poverty."

How great a part of mankind bear poverty with cheerfulness, because they have been bred in it, and are accustomed to it? Shall we not be able to acquire by reason and reflection, what the meanest artisan acquires by habit? But if our minds are not previously informed, how can this be expected, as no rank can secure us from being numbered among

the vulgar ; on the contrary, if we have applied our hearts unto wisdom, we shall know that a sure method to secure content will be, perhaps, never to see superiors with envy ; to reflect on the various calamities and misfortunes that human nature is subject to ; and to form a regular comparison between ourselves, and those who are placed below us in the enjoyments of life : those considerations will fortify and strengthen the mind against the impressions of sorrow ; will reconcile us to the natural distresses which befall it, and prepare us for the enjoyment of peace and tranquillity. As great inconveniencies attend extremes, so much of our happiness depends upon an evenness of temper ; in not suffering ourselves to be too much elated in the season of prosperity, nor too much

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much depressed in that of adversity. Absolute misery is to be avoided, by a proper behaviour under all the complicated ills of human life.

Affliction is the wholesome soil of virtue,
Where patience, honour, sweet humanity,
Calm fortitude take root, and strongly flourish;
But prosperous fortune, that allures with pleasure,
Dazzles with pomp, and undermines with flattery,
Poisons the soil, and its best product kills.

MALLET'S Alfred.

Sudden accessions of great or good fortune, I have already observed, are attended with infinitely worse consequences to the mind, than the sharpest afflictions; it renders people forgetful of their religious duties, or the practice they direct; and of moral obligations: it causes the genial spirit of affection, which actuates a good heart, to

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evaporate, and renders us incapable, though possessed of the balm, of applying it to the wounds of friendship, or the relief of distressed virtue. In this situation, it is the happiness of misfortune only, which can restore a man so far to society as to become humane, useful, or agreeable, even to himself, upon reflection.—It is an usual saying, “ that there cannot be a more unhappy man in the world, than he who has never experienced adversity.”

Exclusive of the variety of situations in which women may be suddenly placed from opposite circumstances to those they were bred up in, which must necessarily produce the severest trials and humiliating mortification; the sensibility and tenderness of our natures, expose us to afflictions of various kinds, conquerable only by resignation, reason,
and

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and reflection; supported by religion, strength of mind, and confidence in God. Therefore, it becomes necessary for every woman in early life to apply herself to the study of resignation, which Mrs. Griffiths observes “ is the only philosophy a woman should boast of.”

I ever am, my dear Madam,

your affectionate friend,

and humble servant,

ELIZA DE CRUI.

L E T -

Continuation of the Family Narrative.

L E T T E R XVIII.

From the Duchefs de CRUI, to Mrs.
PIERPONT.

DEAR MADAM,

ABOUT the time mentioned in my last, Mr. Filmer returned home from his travels.—Sanguine as his parents had been on his account, he fully answered their expectations. He had visited most of the courts in Europe, and returned with his views greatly enlarged, not of exterior nature only, and the works of art, but of human life and manners; the connections and religious establishments, the constitution
and

and policy of the several states and kingdoms of Europe.

He was handsome in his person, agreeable in his manner, and joined to the sprightliness of conversation an uncommon solidity of judgment. Let the conversation turn on history, fable, or philosophy, his memory laid before him every thing he had read, his judgment made him quote it *a propos*; his vivacity made him the recital pertinently agreeable, and his genius inspired him with delicacy and taste. He understood most arts, without practising them; and without being himself a poet, he understood poetry. He spoke of every thing as a man who understands what he is speaking of, and contented himself with letting it occasionally be seen that he was a *connoisseur* in all matters of taste and elegance, though he professed only
being

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being an admirer of them. He could, with great judgment, point out the beauties of a fine picture, without loading his description with a vile jargon of technical terms, ill understood, and consequently misapplied. When others talked of certain inexplicable delicacies, nameless graces, and other fine terms, he always reserved his raptures till he received his conviction.

He confined his examination of objects merely intellectual, entirely to those simple truths which reason confirms, and whose beneficial influence on the happiness of our particular system, as well as on the general good, is sufficient to demonstrate their excellence. He employed himself principally in the mathematical sciences, in examining the powers and properties of natural things,
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and in astronomy. In short, he had studied that part of speculative philosophy, which, with the assistance of the senses, and careful reasoning, leads to a clear, though by no means a complete knowledge of nature, and her majestically simple and beneficent laws. And was of opinion, as natural philosophy serves to adorn the mind, and gratify a laudable spirit of inquiry, it held the first rank in recreative sciences.

Sir John had early informed him, that had not logic been reduced in the schools to a heap of frivolous subtleties, the study of it would be necessary to those who are born to secure to mankind, the peaceable enjoyments of their rights and properties; but they must seek elsewhere for rules of manners and equity; and which with a little application, they may

may extract from this general maxim, *love thy neighbour as thyself, and do nothing unto him, which thou wouldst not have done unto thee.* Sir John had cautioned his son to beware of diving too deeply into divinity, and of seeking to understand syllogisms, which have been formed with no other design but that they might *not* be understood: reason herself may be lost by refinement. The wit of the schoolmen, like the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, consisted much in the straining at gnats, and swallowing of camels; for they that are curious in subtleties, and ignorant in things of solid knowledge, prove themselves mere triflers. Mr. Filmer had profited by the great attention which had been paid him by his excellent parents, and, to sum up his character, it was totally different
from

from that of the modern fine gentleman. For to paint the character of one of these, he must be above all rule, restriction, and order; despise, and ridicule every thing which is sacred, disregard all ties of duty, bid defiance to every principle and sentiment of honour, any farther than to accept a challenge, or pay debts contracted by gaming. As to tradesmen, superior beings like these, consider them as poor reptiles; and that *they* ought to live upon their industry and labour, even to the ruin of their honest families, are doctrines generally maintained by a modern fine gentleman.

Mr. Filmer had never been weak enough to be subdued by imitation, so as to be seduced into current follies; and become good for nothing by the force of example. Nothing,
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however, is so common as that flimsy pliancy, that imbecillity of character, which renders so many young men the victims of false shame. Oft-times, from an excess of modesty, or sheepish diffidence, people dare not form an opinion of their own, but are content to be led by those of others. Our innate consciousness is prior and superior to logic and casuistry ; therefore we should never venture on any action where we have the least doubt of its propriety ; nor ever entertain such a low opinion of our own understanding, or so high a one of others, as to comply with any thing without perfectly comprehending it. I am convinced we are indebted for all our miseries to our distrust of that guide which providence allotted us, our own natural reason. The uninformed
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herd of mankind are governed by words and names, which they implicitly receive without either knowing or asking the meaning. The polite world also, to save their valuable time and trouble, adopt, and use words in the signification of the day; not having leisure, nor inclination to analyse them; and thus often misled by *sounds*, and not always secured by *sense*, they are hurried into fatal errors, which they do not give their understandings fair play to prevent.

To understand, is the effect of thinking; and when we consider they never think, can we be surprised at their deficiencies! It is natural amongst men that are ignorant of what governs their own thoughts, and those of others, to wonder at any person whose ideas differ from their own; not considering that, as reason is ever unvariable, the same

diversity of judgment and opinion, causes the same astonishment on the other side : but, when we come to consider, it is no more to be wondered at, than that they are unlike in their faces. For the same argument must have different effects according to men's different understandings.

If Lady Sophia had beheld Mr. Filmer with indifference, especially as he appeared much captivated with her ; nature must have laid her under the curse which St. Catharine of Sienna so shrewdly, and so justly observes, characterizes the devil, *an incapacity for loving* *. Mr. Filmer's admiration of her was very natural, as her beauty and exterior appearance fascinated all those who beheld her. There was a sprightliness in her whole figure which was

* Agreeable to this, is the poet's idea in Richard III.

very attracting; her conversation was suitable to it: she had great life and spirit, the common *routine* of discourse, and a fashionable readiness to skim lightly over all subjects: her understanding, for want of cultivation as (has been already observed) was sufficiently circumscribed; but what she wanted in solid attainments she made up in vivacity, no unsuccessful substitute in general estimation. In short, the heart of Mr. Filmer was taken by surprize, and from the personal charms of Lady Sophia, he inferred the beauties of her mind.

The emotions of the heart seldom follow the dictates of reason. Love, by Plato, is styled the prince of sophists; does it not produce the same effect on its votaries, as wine does on drunkards?

Sir John and Lady Filmer beheld this rising passion with regret; they had long

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formed a wish that Lady Harriet might be the object of his affections. They did not, however, attempt to pull out precipitately the dart, with which his heart was transfixed, but endeavoured to loosen it by degrees. The poet says,

Affection is not rated from the heart.

Agreeable to this, they put a restraint on themselves: by being too urgent, sometimes all is lost. They were sensible that an error of the heart is much more difficult to eradicate, with virtuous minds, than an error in the understanding. But they flattered themselves, he would soon be enabled to triumph over an inclination, which reason could not support. And as they knew passions are not to be opposed, but counteracted: and that, however we may boast of the power of reason, yet at a
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certain age, it is a weak second, when opposed to our sensibility ; it immediately occurred to them, to send Lady Sophia, under the care of Mrs. Rofs, on a visit to Sir James and Lady Bruce. As she had been very solicitous for this jaunt before Mr. Filmer's arrival, her ladyship could not excuse herself from going, though she would willingly have declined it.

As soon as Lady Sophia and Mrs. Rofs were set out for Yorkshire, Lady Filmer went to town, and brought Lady Harriet home. Her features, separately taken, were not so fine as her sister's, and yet the composition produced something more pleasing than beauty itself ; her countenance being informed with a sweetness, which does not captivate, but attract, the hearts of those who behold it, creating that sensation through

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the eyes which harmony does through the ears, and converting the whole soul into an uniform complacency and approbation. The tone of her voice was melodious; and she could neither look nor move without exhibiting a thousand graces. Possessed of almost every excellence, unconscious of any, she thus heightened them all. She was modest, and diffident of her own opinion; yet always perfectly comprehended the subject on which she gave it, and saw the question in its true light: she had neither pride, prejudice, nor precipitancy, to misguide her: *she was true* (to borrow a phrase of Madame de Sevigné's); and therefore judged truly. If there were subjects too intricate, too complicated, for the youthful simplicity of her soul, her ignorance of them served only to display a new beauty in her

her character, which resulted from her acknowledging that very ignorance. The great characteristic of her understanding was taste; but when she said most on a subject, she shewed that she had much more to say; and by this unwillingness to triumph, she persuaded the more.

The impression she made on Mr. Filmer, fully answered his fond parents expectations. He only beheld her at first as the sister of Lady Sophia, but every hour rendered her more interesting to him: and his judgment confirmed the emotions of his heart.

Sir John and Lady Filmer, observed the whole progress of his passion; but affecting to be totally ignorant of it, used carelessly, in his presence, to point out the difference in the characters of the

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two sisters : Mr. Filmer began to relish such comparisons, as helped to justify him to *himself*, for his change of sentiments.

When our reason acquiesces not, our hearts are not fairly won ; they are but taken by surprize, and the possession is not long tenable. As soon as a man of sense is forced to blush at his choice, he ought to renounce it without hesitation.

Sir John and Lady Filmer were assisted in this scheme by a lady who was with them on a visit ; who knew that a never-failing method to cure people of their partiality for any particular person, is to throw an air of ridicule on the object who inspires it. For this reason she painted Lady Sophia in true, but ridiculous colours.

To

To the misfortune of human nature, this weapon is too often employed on occasions where it becomes the greatest cruelty.

Mr. Filmer had never made any declaration of his passion to Lady Sophia; but one of his nice sense of honour was fearful of having excited in her a partiality in his favour, from the more than common attentions he was conscious of having shewn her. This determined him to keep his present sentiments secret, until he saw the result on Lady Sophia. He flattered himself his partiality for Lady Harriet was concealed; but when one loves, passion is visible in every thing, it speaks even in silence.

A few hours after Lady Harriet's arrival at Filmer-Place, she went to enquire for her old friend Mrs. Hastings, Lady Filmer's maid; a worthy woman,
 who

who had lived with her for many years, much attached to the family, and extremely fond of Lady Harriet. After mutual enquiries, of each others health, &c. Mrs. Hastings asked lady Harriet how she liked the young 'squire? she answered, "that as yet, she could judge no further of him than by his person, which was very handsome." "Yes, replied Mrs. Hastings, he is both good and handsome, and there is but one young lady worthy of him—And that is *your sweet self*. But God forgive him, he has fallen in love with your proud sister, and they say it will be a match." Lady Harriet, in consequence of this intelligence, looked on Mr. Filmer as her destined brother-in-law, and behaved with that unaffected ease before him, displaying a thousand beauties in her conversation which would
other-

otherwise have been concealed, had she not been under this prepossession.

They passed a great many hours together very agreeably, and rode out on horseback every day. In one of their excursions, about six weeks after her arrival at Filmer-Place, they met Lord Dacres and his sister Lady Julia A——, who were on their way to wait on her. After mutual compliments had passed, Lady Harriet begged them to go on, and she and Mr. Filmer would accompany them on horse-back. These young Ladies were the most intimate friends. At school they had shared one bed, one purse, and might be said to have but one heart. Lady Julia entertained the highest veneration also for Lady Filmer; and had greatly profited by her instructions to her friend.

Lord

Lord Dacres was lately returned from abroad, had seen Lady Harriet, and fancied himself passionately in love with her, and had obtained the Duke his father's consent to make his addresses to her: this was the intention of his present visit. Lady Harriet had never shewn any partiality for him, but now beheld him with the greatest indifference, bordering upon dislike. She guessed his intention from hints Lady Julia had given her, and found herself, for the first time, unhappy.

Mr. Filmer observed her emotion, and sighing, said, he supposed Lord Dacres was her lover. Lady Harriet only blushing a reply, confirmed him in his opinion.

Lord Dacres having intimated his intentions to Sir John, he referred him
to

to her uncle Sir James Bruce ; but could not refuse his request of permitting him to see Lady Harriet in private, when he urged his passion with the greatest vehemence. An ordinary lover is always more agitated by his own desires, than touched by the merit of his mistress. Lady Harriet heard him with impatience, and then told him, that she was too young to think of marriage, and desired him to think no more of her.

Mr. Filmer had entreated his mother to be present at this interview ; and upon her declining it, had urged with great warmth the impropriety of Lady Harriet's seeing Lord Dacres alone.

After dinner, Lady Julia asking Lady Harriet to sing, she sent for her mandoline, and at her friend's request sung *Ab!*
si vous pouvies comprendre ce que mon cœur
sens

sens pour vous. Mr. Filmer was passionately fond of music, and had never known her excellence in it. All his faculties had been for some time absorbed in admiration; the loveliness of her person, and the unaffected innocence of her behaviour and conversation, had charmed him; but when he heard her melodious voice, his raptures were unbounded.

Lord Dacres was too much ingrossed with himself, to listen long to even the supposed object of his affections. After passing Lady Harriet a slight compliment, in a fashionable phrase, he began to display his talents in egotism; and however barren the subject might be to any other, yet it afforded his lordship great copiousness of matter.

The opera girls at Paris had told him he was very amiable: he believed them;

them; and after so decisive an evidence, thought it needless to give himself any trouble to become in reality, what he was already in imagination. His only ambition was to be a leader in the fashions. He was always elegantly dressed, every hair on his head knew its own station, which if it chanced to lose, the gloss on his hat informed him of it. His Lordship had not attended much to the poet, who says,

'Tis the mind that makes the body rich;
And as the sun breaks through the darkest clouds,
So honour pierceth in the meanest habit.

Mr. Addison thought no fine gentleman could exist without a dash of the coxcomb; and my Lord Rochester says, that it is a character not to be acquired but by much pains and reflection. It is
cer-

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certain that men derive some advantage from it, for it is hardly in fortune's power to make a coxcomb unhappy; as his good opinion of himself will, in a great degree, support him under all mortifications. Lord Dacres, in consequence of this happy propensity, did not suppose that Lady Harriet's reserve arose from any thing but the timidity of youth. Lady Julia A——, his sister, distinguished better; when they retired, she took Lady Harriet in her arms, burst into tears, and said, “ My sweet friend, I shall never have you for my sister!” Although she wished the match to take place upon her brother's account, yet she thought that Lady Harriet was too good for him: and had a soul capable of that refined friendship, which prefers the happiness of those

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we love, to any selfish gratification. "I have seen, said she, my dear Harriet, a great deal within these few hours: you are beloved by Mr. Filmer, you love him, your every gesture betrays your heart!" Lady Harriet's modesty was visible in a natural habitual blush, which was increased upon the least occasion, and often observed without any seemingly adequate cause. Figure then what her confusion must be, when taxed so roundly, by her best friend. Had she been possessed of any art or knowledge of the world, she might have reflected, that the sincerest and most delicate affection doth not preclude a reserve of secrets, in the discovery of which, our self-love would not find its account. But Lady Harriet was unaccustomed to disguise the genuine feelings of her heart: the sagacity of her friend opened her eyes,

she discovered, for the first time, that she really loved Mr. Filmer, acknowledged it; but acquainted Lady Julia that *he was to be married to her sister.*

On Lord Dacres' return home, Lady Julia concealed from him the discovery she had made at Filmer-Place; flattering herself, that if Mr. Filmer married Lady Sophia, Lady Harriet might be induced to favour his pretensions: as when the evil is without a remedy, people *must*, and generally *do*, easily find a consolation.

After their departure, Lady Harriet retired to her apartment, where she gave a loose to her tears. Among all the passions; there is none so apt to magnify trifles, and to produce strong conviction from the slightest probabilities, as jealousy.

Sir

Sir John and Lady Filmer, had observed Mr. Filmer walking in the Park for two hours; with his arms across, seemingly much disordered in his mind. At last he came and joined them—Lady Filmer affected to be in great spirits; and asked him if he was not greatly rejoiced in Lady Harriet's good fortune. He answered, coldly, “that they might judge of it in that light, *he* did not. That Lord Dacres' title and fortune, were far from being, in his estimation, sufficient compensations for his want of morals, honesty, and goodness of heart. If men, said he, may commit acts of debauchery, and atrocious deviations from moral rectitude, without the least danger of being the worse received in the world, crimes of the most dangerous consequences to society must daily gain ground, and men proceed from bad

100 L E T T E R X V I I I.

to worse, till at last the distinction between virtue and vice will scarce be known or regarded. The laws, added he, reach only part of the crimes which disturb society; public censure and discountenance is a punishment in which every one may be both judge and executioner; and were they properly inflicted, would prove most powerful towards effecting a general reformation: but while we exhaust all our censure on folly, which should only excite our compassion, and suffer vice, the proper object of hatred and contempt, to escape with impunity, if it has rank and fortune to support it, we cannot hope to see the successfully wicked reclaimed.

When laws are dup'd, 'tis not unjust nor mean
To seize the proper time for honest spleen.

ARMSTRONG.

“ You

L E T T E R XVIII. 101

“ You may remember, madam, continued Mr. Filmer, what your favourite poet says,

For we bid this be done,
When evil deeds have their permissive pass,
And not the punishment.

Agreeable to this, said he, I have always acted upon the principles of honouring virtue, and shunning vice, which deterred me from associating with Lord Dacres abroad. One gentleman, of most distinguished character, who travelled with him as his companion, left him, by which he resigned a considerable salary, because of the enormity of his vices; and although another man of merit, supplied his place, and is still with him, it has arose only from the necessity of his affairs; as, to my certain knowledge, he despises him most

heartily." — Mr. Filmer walked hastily across the room, said he could not discover what Lady Harriet could see in him! he then sat down, got up again, spoke as if he wanted breath: said, "it was very well! it was nothing to him! — That women would marry any thing for titles! That in their estimation, a title (though with a fool) out-weighed all the flattering attentions, and endearing tenderness of a man of true worth and spirit! — And thanked God he had no sisters undisposed of — as he should run mad at their follies! It was with pleasure, Sir John and Lady Filmer observed these symptoms.

We are seldom much offended at the faults of others, when we are not injured by them. His father smiled at his impetuosity; and only asked him, if any thing

thing had induced him particularly to shun Lord Dacres abroad? He answered, "No; but that no man had ever so fully displayed a wickedness of heart, and a littleness of soul, as he did; accompanied with just sense enough to support the foppery of the day, and to make vice appear excusable, to the unthinking. At Paris, added he, I used to think him quite in his element: *his* levity agreed with the inhabitants of that gay city; which made him averse to all abstruse inquiry. The *toujours gay*, accompanies the French from Parnassus to the toilette. Lord Dacres lived magnificently, and displayed abundance of English gold; but it never yet reached my ears, that he ever produced any true sterling sense, or sound reason."

Lady Harriet did not appear until supper-time, when her eyes were swelled

with crying. Mr. Filmer, like Shakspeare, thought a woman more lovely for her tears. Mankind admire a beautiful woman, and are bewitched with a great fortune; they find a natural inclination to the one, and a strong propensity to the other. But the man of principle, the man of sense and taste, can only sincerely love the woman of delicate sensibility. Beauty may direct the shaft, but sensibility must point it. Pygmalion had quickly ceased to adore his statue, had not Venus informed it with life and sentiment.

Mr. Filmer was sensibly struck with Lady Harriet's new appearance: though he partly attributed it to the hurry and perturbation of her spirits on such an interesting occasion; yet he could not well account for her tears; prepossessed as he was, in the opinion that Lord Dacres

eres' addressees were agreeable to her: but whatever conjecture he might form, it is certain, her present appearance, by no means contributed to his good humour. After the servants were withdrawn, he told her, that Lord Dacres was very happy in being the object of her sensibility. She could only reply, "Indeed, sir, you are very cruel," and burst into tears: she was going to retire, when Sir John detained her, endeavouring to laugh her into spirits; but her heart was then too much affected to be amused. Mr. Filmer made a slight apology, and retired.

This renewed Lady Harriet's uneasiness: she said, "Do, my dear Sir John, go after him; he is angry with me; and (though I do not know for what) I cannot bear it." Recollecting herself—she blushed, while Sir John and Lady
Fil-

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Filmer smiled; and the latter accompanying her to her chamber, she hung about her neck, and kissing her, said, “ My dear mama, (as I *used* to call you), send me to school to-morrow; it is necessary for my peace.” After Lady Filmer had inquired of her the subject of her *tête a tête* with Lord Dacres, she wished her good night, assured her she would ever be her dear mama, and every thing should be done to render her happy.

I ever am, dear Madam,

your affectionate friend,

ELIZA DE CRUI.

L E T-

L E T T E R XIX.

From the Duchefs DE CRUI, to Mrs.
PIERPONT.

DEAR MADAM,

YOU remember, in my laſt, Lady Harriet and Mr. Filmer had both diſcontentedly retired to reſt. Morpheus did not take compaſſion by ſtrewing their beds with poppies.

As neither of them could ſleep they aroſe, and both retiring to the Park, to their mutual ſurprize, met each other at five o'clock in the morning. They were equally embarraſſed, and much at a loſs for converſation; at laſt, with infinite hesitation, and broken accents, Mr. Filmer ſaid, that he was ſorry he had offended her Ladyſhip the
night

night before: Lady Harriet with no less trepidation of spirits, answered, after several attempts, that she had thought herself unhappy in having disoblighed him, “but I have, said she, asked my Lady to send me to school.” “I suppose then, said Mr. Filmer, with a trembling voice, your Ladyship is going to town to buy your marriage clothes!” “Talk not to me of marriage,” replied Lady Harriet, I hate the thoughts of it, and I detest Lord Dacres.” This she pronounced in so determined a voice, that it left Mr. Filmer no more room for jealousy, on his Lordship’s account. But unwilling to let the conversation stop here, he immediately added, “Then perhaps there is some other happy man you like better?” The manner in which this was pronounced, afforded Lady Harriet some faint

faint hopes : what Lady Julia had said to her, and a thousand other flattering circumstances, crouded into her mind.

While she was embarrassed for a reply, they were surprised by a storm as violent, and no less favourable perhaps to their mutual wishes, than that by which Æneas and Dido were driven together into the same cave.

Lady Harriet and Mr. Filmer were obliged to take shelter in a temple. The violence of the rain did not afford Lady Harriet any hopes of being relieved from this conversation, which had become dreadfully interesting to her. Mr. Filmer seemed to expect a reply to his insinuation of some favoured object being the cause of the present perturbation of her spirits; but the emotions of her heart were too violent, and the agitation of her mind too great to answer him,
not

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nor could she longer conceal them; she burst into tears. Mr. Filmer was astonished at the apparent distress he had occasioned to her, and kneeling down, kissing her hand, declared he would never pardon himself for giving her the smallest uneasiness: that he did not mean to distress her, but that his life depended upon her answer. "Whatever it is, said he, I cannot be more miserable than in my present dreadful state of suspense: a decisive fate, even the most terrible, is more supportable than this uncertainty." Lady Harriet's spirits began to revive; but conscious of her inclinations, and fearful of his pre-engagement to her sister, she was covered with confusion, and could only reply, "Yes, there is, there is!" Mr. Filmer here interrupted her, intreated her not to add what she was going to say, in pity to his fond bosom, that must be rent in ten
thou-

L E T T E R X I X. III

thousand pieces :” he then walked hastily about the room, when looking up to Lady Harriet, he fancied he saw a ray of cheerfulness animate her countenance: this gave a turn to his thoughts; he intreated her to add what she was going to say, when he interrupted her. She immediately said, “ There is a favoured object, but he can never be any thing to me; I dare not hope, I dare not even wish that he should !” “ Why ! replied Mr. Filmer, for what reason—Heavens! what can be the impediment !” “ He loves my sister, said she, and I dare not be so unjust, as even to wish to rob her of him.” Their looks soon unravelled the whole mystery, to their mutual satisfaction. When the mind is greatly agitated, its passions raised to the highest pitch, and all its emotions violent and strong; language is inadequate to its purposes: a look, a sigh, a tear, are often

ten more expressive than the most elaborate speeches.—Language therefore becomes unnecessary, when souls immediately communicate, perceive, and operate on each other; and by such intercourse, more intelligence is exchanged in a moment, than all the powers of language can ever convey. Death itself, it has been observed, is hardly a tribute more certainly paid by old age to nature, than by youth to love.

For my own part, I think differently: I believe some hearts are formed for one another; and that, if these never meet, they can never be affected with a real passion; but at the same time, that if they accidentally meet, they would feel a sympathy for one another at first sight, which would secretly inform them that they were intended for each other; and that they must both be miserable, if ever separated.

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The lovers walked for four hours, which did not appear unto them more than four minutes, when they were summoned by the breakfast-bell. They appeared so happy, that Sir John and Lady Filmer congratulated them upon being in better spirits and humour, than they both had been the preceding evening. "But own to me, Edward, said Sir John, that you was in a very extraordinary humour last night." Mr. Filmer replied that, "If he had forgot himself *one* instant to such parents, he was inexcusable; but the physicians, sir, said he, will inform you, that it is possible to be mad in *one* point only, and yet be very well in *others*, as all the strings of a lute may be in tune but one: that Lord Dacres' visit, and declaration at setting out, "that Lady Harriet had made him the happiest of men," had deprived him al-

most of his senses." Sir John archly asked him, how that matter affected him, or how he knew Lady Harriet had not encouraged Lord Dacres?

This conversation was too interesting for the object of it to witness, without confusion. Lady Harriet was going to retire, when Mr. Filmer begging her to be seated, told Sir John, he would acquaint him with the particulars another time; that at present he would only tell him, that as commentators find beauties in an author, to which the author was, perhaps, a stranger; so Lord Dacres had complimented her for a distinction she never designed him.

After breakfast, when Sir John and Mr. Filmer retired, Lady Filmer told Lady Harriet, she flattered herself Mr. Filmer had inspired her with a partiality in his favour. She could only reply by hiding

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ing her head in her bosom, and saying, " I am afraid, madam, you think me a forward girl, but I could not help loving him." Mr. Filmer, who, in his situation, could only leave her to communicate happiness to his father, returned just in time to hear the last words. I shall not take upon me to describe his transports. Let it suffice to say, Lady Harriet gently withdrew her hand from him. Lady Filmer had not thought it necessary to inspire her with these severe maxims, which make a young lady fear the sight of handsome men, and which augment her danger, by giving her too much knowledge in the distrust of them. Lady Filmer, as soon as her son could permit her to speak, assured Lady Harriet, that in loving him, she fulfilled every desire of her heart: " Yes, said

Sir John, (who by this time had joined them), none can question our joy in being allied to Lady Harriet; but you remember what she told Lord Dacres, that she would not even think of marriage, until her brother came home." "She is indeed, replied Lady Filmer, very young, and has yet a great deal to learn. I think, my love, added she, you told me last night you wished to go back to school." Lady Harriet blushed; while Mr. Filmer exclaimed, "For Heaven sake, madam, spare me, and do not think of depriving me of my angel!" His mother smiled, and desired him to recollect what he had said the day before, of the impropriety of a young lady's seeing a declared lover alone? "But as I have not, said she, altered my opinion; I shall not prevent your seeing her;

L E T T E R X I X. 117

her; but as my dear Harriet has always been a very good girl, if you have subverted *her* reason, you owe her every resource *yours* can supply." Wisdom is easily acquired—The principal requisite is to get acquainted with a select number of truths, that their inestimable value, and divine beauty, may induce us to make them the constant rule of our lives. A sensible and ingenuous heart, is here the most material point; it comes always to the assistance of the understanding: and as the examples, my dear Harriet, are not very rare, of people who, excited by love, have arrived at perfection in any art and science with great celerity; I make no doubt but it will animate you with noble desires after the beautiful and excellent, and render you more ambitiously eager in the pursuit of wisdom and virtue."

Mr. Filmer improved Lady Harriet's taste, by furnishing her mind with the best criticisms on ancient literature. Lady Filmer considered the reading of poetry as a material requisite in polite education; because good poetry, at the same time it makes a strong impression on the heart, contributes to inform the understanding, and improve the taste. It can never be a dispute with the liberal, whether the fine arts are the proper province for the exercise of female genius. Nothing, certainly; but the jealousy of the men, and the envy of trifling women, could urge the least pretence for excluding our sex from any of these elegant and happy amusements which the arts of imitation may afford them. Some of these, however, are more generally allowed them than others—Yet for what reason? Why allow

allow them music, and debar them from poetry? This was so much Lady Filmer's opinion, that she informed Lady Harriet, that it would be shameful to be ignorant of the more admired writings in this part of literature. The titles of wit, and poetess, have indeed been disgraced too often by Sapphos and Corinnas, ancient and modern; and the feelings of mankind are totally guided by the most contracted and partial prejudices. But it is not fair to judge of the whole sex by general examples; nor, ought the reproach to be extended beyond the crime, nor all women condemned, because some of the sex are contemptible.

Machiavel observes, that no collective bodies of people, more than particular

cular persons, can be totally good or bad.

In this manner did Lady Filmer instruct her lovely pupil. I shall now take leave of this happy family, and send you letters, which will carry on the *family narrative* considerably, without having recourse to my own pen.

I ever am, my dear Madam,

yours entirely,

ELIZA DE CRUI.

LET.

L E T T E R XX.

From Mrs. Ross, to Lady FILMER.

DEAR MADAM,

Bruce-Hill.

AS in my last, I gave your Ladyship an account of our safe arrival at this place—I delayed writing until I had been here for some time. I have had, as your Ladyship foresaw, great difficulties with Lady Sophia: I am certain she penetrated your views in sending her away: I am very happy to find they have succeeded.

Lady Bruce is considerably worse since our arrival: Sir James is the most tender and affectionate husband. They have a charming family, two sons and two daughters. Mr. Bruce was intimately acquainted with Mr. Filmer abroad—need I give a greater proof of his merit?

rit? You would be charmed with the young ladies: they are perfectly well informed in every branch of polite literature. Young as they are, they have nothing of youth about them, but its innocence and beauty. They have good sense, but there is a charming simplicity in their hearts, such as would give you an idea of nature truly refined. I find they are indebted for these accomplishments to a young lady of the name of Byron, who has resided here for some time. A want of fortune, of beauty, and the possession of a fine understanding, has prevented her from marrying: while the goodness of her character, her acknowledged virtue, and integrity of heart, has procured her sincere and valuable friends. Among the number was Lady Bruce, who enhanced the obligations she conferred, by her delicacy in
at-

attempting to convince her, that the most exalted pitch of friendship is to receive without a blush, the bounties of a friend, and to partake of the pleasure he has in obliging. “ Genuine gratitude (you once nobly told me) ever balances accounts with benevolence; or rather always brings the latter in debtor; for, in truth, the self-approbation of the generous mind, is no trivial advantage to those that confer favours: it gives us apt and prompt payment for the good we do; and in one and the same instant communicates happiness to the heart that bestows it.” What can be said in answer to such exalted goodness: suffer me to say, with my admired poet,

Unhappy he! who feels each neighbour's woe,
Yet as relief, no comfort can bestow.

Unhap-

Unhappy too, who feels each kind essay,
And for great favours, has but words to pay.
Who, scornful of the flatterer's fawning art,
Dreads ev'n to pour his gratitude of heart;
And with a distant lover's silent pain,
Must the best movements of his soul restrain.

ARMSTRONG.

To a very amiable disposition by nature, Miss Byron has united those graces of conversation, which are only acquired in polite circles. She is, at the same time, unconscious of her own merit; and addresses every one with the greatest candour and complaisance. Her virtues are without ostentation; she displays knowledge without pride, an inviolable attachment to her duty, and a heart capable of sacrificing almost every thing to friendship. Although she has only fifty pounds a year, yet she makes a very genteel appearance in dress; and is also very charitable: nay even works (by depriv-
ing

ing herself of some of those hours set apart for repose), for the relief of distressed families. To open our purses, when riches have put it in our power, is no great effort; but by our natural abilities alone, to supply the want of riches in our relief to the indigent, appears to me a double generosity.

The many virtues possessed by the lady of this mansion, are, in a great measure, eclipsed by bigotry; which, in whatever heart it enters, instead of promoting the cause of religion, is but too apt to inspire an aversion of it in others. It totally divests it of charity, which is its noblest ornament; and indeed the very basis of its existence. She is also superstitious, which I believe, is more or less, in every person, a natural defect; happily poised is that mind, which on the one hand is too strong to be affected with the slavish fears it brings along with it;

it; and on the other, runs not into the contrary extreme of scepticism, the parent of infidelity. Religion and love heighten our relish for the things of both worlds; what pity it is, that they should subdue the mind either by superstition or enthusiasm, and thereby debase the minds they are so well fitted to exalt! All excess is vicious, and that spot only which is free and unpossessed by excess, is the point of moderation, and the very centre of virtue and truth, surrounded with extremes, without partaking of them. Sir James appeared to me, at first, to be a little rough in his manner; but I now see he is mild, generous, and compassionate. His great attention to my Lady in her distressed situation, places him very high in my estimation. I admire the Spaniards for this quality: they never forsake their friends in sickness; and per-

persons who do not see one another four times in the year, when *in health*, yet are constant in their visits three or four times a day when they are *indisposed*.

I have read of a nation in Africa, where the sick receive no assistance: they are obliged to cure themselves as well as they can; and when they are recovered, live in cordiality with those who had abandoned them. I am afraid christianity would not even influence me to imitate these pagans in this particular. But to return to Sir James: he is a lover of truth, and a strict observer of it, yet he speaks without severity; and in a manner that renders it agreeable, which is not the case with the generality of mankind. He remembers all the good things he has heard you say: judge then if he is not excellent company. In short, merit runs in a rich vein through his family, like the
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ore-streak in a mine. On our arrival here, Lady Sophia was much surprised to find her cousins elegant and accomplished. As there was nothing, even in her estimation, in which she possesses the pre-eminence, she began to play off some quality-airs — I endeavoured to point out the absurdity of it. “In what, said I, madam, do you pride yourself! a little superiority of rank, a trifling advantage you did not procure for yourself? In so highly prizing this, you seem to confess, that you would be less estimable if you were deprived of it, and that you have nothing you could substitute in its place. Indeed, madam, such haughtiness only serves to debase you; whoever makes such pretensions to respect, does not command it; on the contrary, by openly courting distinctions, proves they are unworthy of them. You can, my dear Lady Sophia, said I to her, give
pride

pride to others by your condescension, you must not yourself condescend to be proud." The other day a poor woman brought a piece of French silk to sell, which she said, a lady in distress wanted to dispose of, to relieve the most pressing wants. Lady Sophia with eagerness purchased it, after abating the woman considerably in her price. In these small instances are the characters of the heart displayed, far more than in greater. I observed Miss Byron withdrew with the woman, which I make no doubt, was to give her something, or inquire her address. Upon her return, Lady Sophia was exulting in the bargain she had made, and asked her if she did not think she had cheapened it with address? She smiled, and answered, " I am persuaded your Ladyship has not fully considered this matter : as you

ask my opinion—it is, that those who can suffer themselves to take advantage of the necessities of their fellow-creatures, in order to buy any thing at a less rate than would allow them the legal interest of the purchase money (suppose they purchase before they want), must, if they possess any humanity, or reflection, look upon the balance in their hands, as exacted from the unfortunate.” Miss Bruce is soon to be married to a Mr. Moss; he is worthy of her, and has a large estate in this neighbourhood. Their nuptials are only postponed on account of Lady Bruce’s extreme illness.

I remain, dear Madam,

your ladyship’s affectionate,

and obliged humble servant,

MARY ROSS.

L E T-

L E T T E R X X I .

From Lady SOPHIA, to Lady HARRIET
F——.

DEAR HARRIET,

I Hope you are at school, studying all your nonsense : and that, in process of time, you will be as wise, as learned, and as ridiculous as your *dear mama*.

Women are rewarded by going out of character, like the bats in the *fable*; they are looked upon as mortals of a doubtful species, hardly owned by either, and laughed at by both. As you was a child, Lady Filmer has educated you as she thought proper: thank God I knew better than to be made a fool of by her wise Ladyship. Mrs. Ross incloses this to her, where I am

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pretty

pretty certain, it will find you. Without understanding logic, astronomy, botany, &c. I can find out her Ladyship's schemes : but she was certainly in the right ; you would have had no chance, child, for Mr. Filmer, if I had remained ; therefore it was necessary my attractions should be sent out of the way. As men of superior abilities are disposed of—to foreign courts, that they may not become too considerable at home. Let me consider this matter : Mr. Filmer is tolerable himself, but then to counter-balance that, he is *no* Lord, and his mother I detest for her over-wisdom. Take him, child, take him ; I have entirely lost conceit of him.

I came here, as you know, with goody Ross.—Mercy on me ! what a tiresome woman she is ! These sage reasoners, these daughters of age and ugliness,

L E T T E R X X I. 133

linefs, may be tolerated for a time, but we cannot always be diverted with what is ridiculous. I at laft loft patience, and defired a *truce* with her morality. By the bye, I have not mended the matter by coming to Bruce-Hill. They are fo regular in all their motions, and act with fuch precision, as if they knew their heads could not direct them, and therefore custom fhould : but this would fuit you to a hair, child—There is fome fun to be fure in the old gentleman, and he fpares nobody when he is in the humour of it. But my Lady for an age paft has had a cancer in her breaft; and as he is an old-fashioned man, this disturbs him, and lofes many a good laugh. My Lady keeps her bed-room; where, forfooth, we muft be poking half the day long, with a methodift preacher—to hear the mufic of her *groans*.

She may be *very* patient, *very* good, and *very* edifying, as Mrs. Ross calls it: but, for my part, I think we should be much happier without her. I wish from my heart she had been dead, that is to say buried, before I came here; for I do not much admire being in the house with dead people. My uncle, though apparently a rough-spun wretch, breathes nothing but the greatest gentleness to her—calls her his dear, suffering angel; (such an angel, were you to see her!) watches by her, reads to her, suffers all the methodist's nonsense (though he knows him to be a hypocritical rascal): sends over all the country for any thing she likes, &c.—The man is certainly bewitched, to act in that manner to an old woman. Mr. Bruce is too serious for me: I have indeed tried to romp with him, having nothing else to do,
but

but he even does that by a method, and I detest his formality. He appears to me to be one of those wise ones, who seem to think nothing so much the characteristic of genius, as to do common things in an uncommon manner, like Hudibras, to count the clock by algebra: or to speak all day long a certain language of inspiration, which (as I have heard said) is like the language of the gods in Homer, who gives other names to all things, without making them in the least otherwise than what they really are. There is another, *and only one other*, young man, in this region of dullness: one Mr. Moss; he is soon to be married to Miss Bruce: I flirt a good deal with him, to render the simpleton uneasy. As to the Miss Bruces, they are so gentle, so timid—but their spirits, poor things! to be sure are broke from the life they

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lead.

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lead. There is a *miss* of thirty years of age, ugly and wise.—Mrs. Rofs makes a great rout about her. I intended to have had some diversion, in playing off the fine lady with them all, but alas! no opportunity has yet offered, nor *can*, until my Lady favours us with her last groan; for we do not see company: and I believe in my conscience *few company would chuse to see us*. Failing in the above scheme, my next resource was to put the country girls to the blush, for their want of knowledge. I had formed a plan in my mind of eternally talking Italian, then meant to start, recollect myself, and cry, Indeed, my dear cousins, I forgot you did not understand me, but every body knows the Italian poets by heart, and you must forgive me. Judge of my surprize, when goody Rofs acquainted me, that they are perfect

fect mistresses of the French and Italian languages, and can write these correctly; in short, that they know but every thing; a great deal more than I shall ever take the trouble to think about.

The first night I came here, their father, by way of entertaining me, made them sing a *duette*, which, by the formality of their manner, one would have taken for one of their Lady-mother's hymns.

Mr. Bruce, would you believe it? bath never said *one* civil thing to me—He has no taste, that is clear.

I have no time at present to write to Lady Filmer: for when I undertake that arduous task, there must not be *a word out of joint*. My respects to her Ladyship; for though I do not love her, we must be well-bred, you know. Prodigies, though they attain our admiration,
fel-

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feldom attract our love. In my acceptance, over-wisdom is as foolish to the full as moderate folly.

This, I told you before, accompanies *one* from Mrs. Ross; *a sermon I suppose*: Harriet be a good child, farewell.

SOPHIA F——.

L E T T E R XXII.

From Mrs. Ross, to Lady FILMER.

DEAR MADAM,

LADY Bruce is now so ill, that they do not think she can live many hours. Lady Sophia has not a mind that can improve under this scene of sorrow;

row; she has urged me much to take a jaunt any where until this melancholy event is over; she says she cannot bear the thoughts of it. Her temper has been much worse since Lord Dacres' proposal to her sister. Sir James was very happy in writing his Lordship an absolute refusal, by the commands of Lady Harriet; as the opinion Mr. Bruce entertains of him is truly despicable, and similar to that of Mr. Filmer's. Inclosed, is a letter from Mr. Lewis, which proves the justness of their decisions concerning him. Lady Sophia sees this matter in a different point of view: she *judiciously* observes, that there are a great many earl's daughters, but only a few dukes: and fewer still possessed of such fortunes as the Duke of A——: and declares that had he asked her, she would have had him, whether her friends, in
their

their wisdom, approved of it or not. To *kill time*, as she calls it, she romps, and coquettes, with Mr. Moss and Mr. Bruce: I have told her that romping is very dangerous, and liberties are taken during these times of freedom, when a young lady is off her guard, which men would never dare otherwise attempt. I have also acquainted her, that the character of a coquette is never amiable, however fashionable. Sensibility and softness, are the characteristics of our sex: and in proportion as we deviate from those, we must diminish in real loveliness.

The methodist parson, I believe, I have not characterized to your Ladyship: he will very soon now be dismissed: delicacy to my Lady, and the fear of hurrying her spirits by a detection of his crimes,

crimes, has alone prevented his being sent away before. He is full of oral sanctity, and mental impiety; a pedant, and a very disagreeable companion. The hypocritical dissimulation, which youth discovers in such teachers, is the great source of that contempt they generally entertain for religion; and also of many other vices; while a puerile, superficial devotion, contracts the mind, and renders it unfit for society. Bad qualities in a clergyman, like faults in a capital picture, appear more conspicuously glaring. How careful then should the clergy be of all their actions, nay even those who profess more than common attention to religious duties, lest by their *fall*, they prove a *stumbling-block* to others. It is recorded of Sir Mathew Hale, that he, for a long time, concealed the consecra-
tion

tion of himself to the stricter duties of religion, lest by some unbecoming and shameful action, he should bring piety into disgrace. Madame Maintenon, also let the public think she slept till eight o'clock, though she was employed in exercises of devotion every morning, for an hour and a half before that time. Young people, in whatever they profess, feel an enthusiasm which leaves them not masters of themselves. They are deceived, in supposing their sentiments will always remain the same. It is impossible while every thing is changing, that we should be immutable. Let us always side with the more moderate opinions; because, in morality, all extremes are almost always visions. We worship God best, when we resemble him most; let this be our aim, but let

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us follow the examples above mentioned. Miss Byron has seen the unfortunate lady who had been obliged to sell her silk : she says, that she is young, and of extraordinary beauty, though very much emaciated. Miss Byron added, that she had longed to know her story, but as she had shewed her some attentions, she was afraid to ask, lest her gratitude might induce her to tell, what otherwise she would wish to conceal, and what might give her pain to relate : and lest it should seem that she thought, from the obligations she had conferred, she had a right to know what she asked : she was so far from thinking these circumstances authorized her to make a property of her, that it was a thought she would have utterly detested herself for, could it have entered into her head.

Lady

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Lady Sophia, who always takes that side of an argument which is least supported by candour, talked of the folly which was easily duped by the designing, and said that good-nature was too frequently the attendant of weakness: that, for her own part, she made no doubt but this was some very unfortunate nymph, who would have exalted herself into a princess, had not Miss Byron's ignorance of the world, deprived her of the dear delight of narrating her adventures; which would consist in dangerous escapes, the treachery of the world, and the faithlessness of the men. Miss Byron smiled, and said to her, "However ignorant, madam, I may be of the world, I cannot suppose you are serious. Young minds are apt to be struck with uncommon sentiments, and to admire such as seem
to

to possess them, while persons in advanced age, either from experience of the world, or the natural depravity of the human heart; ascribe every thing to affectation and design, that contradicts certain received opinions. Now, I would therefore suppose, your ladyship would rather run the risk of misplacing bounty, than, by not being charitable through a political caution, and dread of being wrong, suffer a real object to want what would succour and preserve them.

Let us suspend our judgment; dear madam; a little time will clear up this matter: and if guilty, her very guilt would render her to me the greater object of compassion. I think, Lady Sophia, you seldom read any but the Italian poets; but I will take the liberty of repeating four lines to you, penned by one whose

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worth can only be equalled by his humanity and genius.

Not only to the good we owe good will,
In good or bad, distress demands it still ;
This with the gen'rous lays distinction low,
Endears a friend, and recommends a foe.

ARMSTRONG.

According to our abilities we should relieve all persons, even the most abandoned reprobates. The good have merit, the bad may repent."

Mr. Bruce said, he had always the good fortune to find his heart consonant to Miss Byron's opinions; "and that compassion seems to be so natural an ornament to ladies, whose soft breasts are made and disposed to entertain tenderness and pity, that Solomon introduced it as a necessary ingredient in the character of a virtuous woman; " she stretcheth

eth forth her hands to the poor (says the champion of wisdom) and reacheth her bread to the needy." That is, her bowels are full of mercy, and she prefers the necessities of others, to her own superfluous delicacies: she moderates her own enjoyments, like the excellent Miss Byron, to be the better enabled to relieve others.

"Compassion proper to mankind appears,
Which nature witnessed, when she gave us tears;
'Tis this, the noblest passion of the mind,
Exalts our race above the brutal kind."

"The innocent heart will always be a charitable one; the peculiar quality of such a mind, being a confidence founded upon its own sentiments. A person who is incapable of deceiving, never suspects the sincerity of others." Lady Sophia, looking at Miss Byron, said, "We can be very generous to others, when we ap-

prehend we may one day possibly want assistance ourselves;" and added, with a sneer, "But beware, Madam, that your bounty, like fire, does not consume itself by its own force: husband the blaze, and be sure some sparks remain to warm yourself:—dependence is precarious."—

Luckily Lady Bruce just then sent for Miss Byron, which relieved us all from uneasiness, as, though she has a great deal of self-possession, it is not easy to figure how she could make such a reply as to preserve at the same time her dignity and good-humour.

Lady Sophia, then addressing Mr. Bruce, said, she detested that ugly old maid; and asked him if he did not think her ridiculous? He answered, "On the contrary, she was very high in his esteem. That she was capable of elegant conversation, possessed refined senti-

sentiments, and great goodness of heart; improves upon acquaintance, and has more than the charm of novelty to recommend her. She joins good sense and graceful ease to modesty, has always something new and entertaining to talk of, without betraying any desire of showing it. She has not only polished manners: *Et la grace plus belle encor que la beauté*, but above all, she has an unaffected ease and elegance, with a serene cheerfulness, which distinguishes her in a moment, to the eye of discernment, from the modern laughers of her sex. Nature, who has dealt impartially with her children, has given them but two distinctions from beasts, reason and laughter; where she has bestowed more of the *one*, she has always conferred less of the *other*; and therefore, when a person laughs at nothing, it is a sure sign of

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a deficiency of understanding. But your Ladyship may have overlooked these qualifications in this amiable woman, as the mind, warped by an attachment to fashionable breeding, cannot perceive this charm, and is apt to mistake it for insensibility, or stupidity. She is not handsome, but the beauties of her mind will ever supply the undecaying charm of sweetness to her external form.

In nature, there's no blemish but the mind :
None can be call'd deform'd, but the unkind.
Virtue is beauty ; but the beauteous evil
Are empty trunks, o'erflourished by the devil.

Personal defects cannot be amended, and the exposing such, can never divert any but weak people. The rational faculty is satisfied only by intellectual communication. It is not good to live in *jest*, since we must die in *earnest*. I know nothing worthier of confutation,
than

than that detestable maxim of *vive la bagatelle*. The medium is the best rule for human conduct : we neither ought to live as if every day were our last, nor as if life would never have an end." Upon Mr. Bruce's observing, that lady Sophia frowned, and did not relish his discourse, he said, " I think an elegant * writer observes, that all the tender and kind passions add to beauty, and all the cruel and unkind to deformity : and it is on this account that good-nature may, very justly be said to be, the best feature in a fine face." Where people give way to ignoble and disagreeable passions, their features at last grow quite ugly. A bad ruling passion, whether envy, jealousy, or vicious love, can soon metamorphose a *grace* into a *monster* :

* Mr. Burke.

thus external beauty depends more upon the soul, than is commonly imagined, for want of reflection. In all the passions, moderation in actions is the rule of virtue; all excess is hurtful and ugly.

It is agreed by philosophers, that there is a strict analogy between the natural and moral systems. In a temperate climate, the works of nature are impressed with more delicate marks of symmetry and proportion, and with a more agreeable mixture of colours.

The superior beauty of nature in all temperate regions, displays itself even in the vegetable, as well as the animal system. Lady Sophia, who by this time was very angry and going to retire, when Mr. Bruce, taking hold of her hands, repeated,

Serene and mild we view the ev'ning air,
The pleasing picture of the smiling fair;

A thou-

A thousand charms, our several senses meet,
Cooling the breeze with fragrant odours sweet.
But, sudden, if the sable clouds deform
The azure sky, and threat the coming storm,
Hasty we flee—ere yet the thunder roar,
And dread, what we so much admir'd before.

Then handing Lady Sophia to the glass, intreated her to mark the effects of passion on her countenance. “Now, Madam, added he, I am certain you will be convinced of what I have been telling you. Pallas herself, as the poets feign, used sometimes to amuse herself by playing on the pipe; which she excelled in: but as she was one day very intent upon her amusement, she strolled to a fountain, where surveying herself in the liquid mirrour, and observing the strange and monstrous appearance of her countenance, she blushed, as you do now, Lady Sophia, and immediately threw

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threw away her pipe. Miss Byron is single; but she has refused several gentlemen who were not happy enough to meet her approbation: and every man of sense must adore her." Lady Sophia smiled, and turning to me, said, she fancied it must then be in the style of the Rinaldo of Tasso, in the last battle between the Christians and the Saracens, who there kills more men than he gave blows.

Die piu morti che colpi.

Mr. Bruce could not help smiling at this folly, but afterwards added, "I know of one myself, of a fortune not despicable, who waits only his father's approbation to throw himself at her feet." Lord, lord, sir! said Lady Sophia, I did not want to hear this toad-eater's panegyric:" and left the room in a passion. What Mr. Bruce had said, was too true to be
for-

forgiven. I followed, and told her, I should have been very glad to have assisted her against Mr. Bruce; but to attempt excusing or palliating an evident fault, looks like a claim put in for the same indulgence to one's own errors: and added, with my usual sincerity, that she should turn her rage inward; that her reason had been subordinate to her pride and affectation; as she had insulted Miss Byron; and by referring herself to Mr. Bruce afterwards, had only incurred the mortification she had received from him, by his just censure. Virgil, in his tenth book, shews us the blindness of passion: when Juno answers Venus in a passion, she begins abruptly, contradicts herself, and asserts falsehoods.

In the evening of the same day, we walked out; Miss Byron and Mr. Bruce
are

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are both great florists and botanists; they had a great deal of conversation upon these subjects; and I thought I could perceive in Mr. Bruce an attachment to this accomplished woman; he first entered into conversation with her, and then said, with warmth, "Nature, madam, to a mind like your's, capable of reflection, every where presents a fund of entertainment: this hill, that river, those woods, afford an infinite scope for contemplation; and you may say, with Shakespeare, that you find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good in every thing. What a source of amusement, continued he, is contained in Sir John Hill's Natural History." As Miss Byron said she had not read it, he gave her the following account of it; that

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natural bodies are divided into three kingdoms, as (they are called,) the animal, vegetable, and mineral; each of which is treated in a separate volume. The first contains a history of fossils or minerals*; the second book, treats of vegetables or plants; and the third of animals: but I shall say no more of it, as I expect it by the York coach. I mention this subject, as I know your Ladyship will receive entertainment from this new work.” I find Miss Byron has informed herself entirely in botany, from a Botanical Lexicon wrote by Berkenhout, where

* In this particular, the Saxons esteem themselves superior to any; they have reduced it so much to a science, that many of the students at the university of Friburg apply themselves more immediately to this study; the agreeable pursuit of which must open a new creation to those who have considered only the superficies of the material world.

the

the terms of botany, (particularly those occurring in the works of Linnæus, and other modern writers,) are applied, derived, explained, contrasted, and exemplified. As the conversation had been unentertaining to Lady Sophia, Mr. Bruce gathered a few flowers, which he presented to her: she refused them, saying she hated flowers and detested the country. He answered, smiling, he could not suppose that could be her Ladyship's real sentiments, but that what she said, was owing to his having had the misfortune to offend her in the morning. "I am afraid, Lady Sophia, (added he) I shall further excite your displeasure, by adding, on the same subject of our morning discourse, that a year is to beauty what a day is to a flower; and who would value

value themselves much upon the possession of a thing, which they are sure to lose in so short a time? Nine or ten years is, what one may call, the natural term of life for beauty in a young person: but by accident or misbehaviour, it may die long before its time. You remember perhaps the French poet.

*Vous avez beau charmer : vous aurez le destin
De ces fleurs, si fraîches, si belles
Qui ne durent qu'un matin :
Commes elles, vous plaisez ; vous passerez comme elles.*

Yet flowers, says he, have pleased every taste, in every country, for almost six thousand years, almost as universally as beauty in woman. Whenever we gather flowers, they present us with new perfections, in proportion to our regarding them with closer attention. They please not only with the beauty and arrangement of their colours, but delight

us with their excellent perfume. They have been always the symbols of joy: they were formerly the inseparable ornaments of feasts; and seem so peculiarly adapted to scenes of pleasure, that decency informed by nature, never admits them into those places where tears and affliction preside. Some affect to be genteely *powdered*, or neatly fringed; while others are plain in their aspect, unaffected in their dress, and content to please with a naked *simplicity*; some assume the monarch's *purple*, some look most becoming in the virgin's *white*; but *black*, doleful black, has no admittance into the wardrobe of spring—The weeds of mourning would be manifest indecorum, when nature holds an universal festival*. Look, said Mr. Bruce, at this nosegay,

* See Hervey's Reflections in a Flower Garden.

I be-

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I believe it is impossible that Zeuxis, with all his skill, could draw this rose so beautiful as it is.—How full, how fresh, how glowing it is! how exquisite the form of its leaves! what delicate gradation of colours! how lovely these little blue fibres shine though the transparent red!

———— Who can paint
Like nature! can imagination boast,
Amid his gay creation, hues like these?
And can he mix them with that matchless skill,
And lay them on so delicately fine,
And lose them in each other, as appears
In every bud that blows?—

THOMPSON'S Spring.

I suppose your Ladyship has read Mr. Hervey's Reflections on a Flower-Garden: how inimitable are his descriptions, and what just ideas he inspires us with, of the exuberant goodness

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of God, who has afforded us, not only what is commodious and comfortable, but what is also splendid and delightful †. The description this ingenious author gives of the passion-flower, is truly curious; he calls it a *blooming religioso*, that carries apparent memorials of the same tremendous and fatal catastrophe.—To this flower he grants the pre-eminence to all others, as bearing such a remarkable resemblance to the righteous branch; the plant of renown." Miss Byron said, that she was entirely of Mr. Bruce's opinion, but acknowledged, though fond of flowers, that she could never feel those raptures at the sight of a bed of tulips which the florists

† This circumstance is finely touched in the Philosophical Transactions, with many other edifying remarks on the beauty of nature, recorded in the book of Job, chap. xxxviii.

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do, or pretend to do. Mr. Bruce said, he must differ with her in that particular, and acquainted us that this beautiful, and bulbous-rooted plant, is a native of Asia; its name signifies a turban, or Turkish cap; that it was first brought into Europe from Constantinople, in the year 1590, and was described by the great and famous Conrad Gesner. The Dutch florists, (particularly those at Harlem,) are so fond of tulips, as to value a fine one at a hundred golden ducats. The improvement Lady Sophia might have reaped by such conversation, was quite thrown away, and of no more service to her, than a sea-chart would be to a man who travels by land. He added, "Now, my dear cousin, you would mortify me very much, could I have supposed you were serious in your

dislike of flowers; for so great is their beauty, and so simple their culture, that some acquaintance with them is rightly esteemed a part of genteel education: a smattering knowledge of them, at least, is one of the agreeable accomplishments of both sexes." Lady Sophia only answered, that in the beginning of his discourse (for discourse, said she, I must call it) he had discovered Miss Byron to be a very extraordinary person, but that she thought he might claim an equal share of merit with her: for if she could find sermons in *stones*, he could find it in *flowers*: "if ever you offer me a flower again, I shall certainly accept of it, in self-defence. I would recommend to your perusal, the Cavalier Marini, who plants all his lands with flowers: there is scarce a thought of his but is fit for a garland:

L'oc-

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L'occhio di primavera,
La pupilla d'amor,
La porpora de prati,
Il fior de gli altri fiori.

The rose is the eye of the spring,
The ball of love's eye,
The purple of the vallies,
And the flower of the flowers.

They are all very early risers in this family ; but I cannot prevail on her Ladyship to accommodate herself to the rules of the house. An elegant author observes on this subject, “ What would a man give for a few years added to his grand climacteric? how much more valuable are our years, before sixty-three : for surely that time is most valuable, which we can live without growing older ; we cannot borrow time from death, but we can take it from its semblance, sleep.” This was the language

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of a man penetrated with the most elevated affection, and highest regard for the woman of his heart, to whom it was addressed *. Early rising contributes to the health, activity, and vigour of animal life. All the powers of human nature are thereby quickened, and made to perform their several functions with greater force and energy; the consequence of which, is a considerable augmentation of actual enjoyment, that otherwise would have been lost. What season so proper for performing the duties of religion and piety? Are not our minds then calm, composed, and serene? Does not the dawning and turn of day, this sweet *hour of prime!* naturally inspire us with exalted ideas of the great Creator and governor of the world; who

* Letters from Henry to Francis.

at first ordained, and still prefers, the delightful vicissitude of day and night, so admirably calculated to promote the happiness of mankind. Revelation and reason, the scripture and the classics, unanimously exhort to this most beneficial practice *. They both invite to *early rising*, by the most engaging motives, and the most alluring representations.

King Alfred is recorded to have divided the night and day into three parts; eight hours he allotted to eat and sleep in; eight for business and recreation; and the other eight he dedicated for study and prayer. What a noble example is this! if our time, (I often tell Lady Sophia,) is not regulated, it will be in vain for us ever to accomplish even the best intentions, as indolence (exclusive

* Virg. Georg. iii. Cantic. vii. 11, 12. Psalm cviii. v. 4.

of unavoidable interruptions) is a great enemy to diligence, and is the parent of all other vices. The Miss Bruces are very ingenious, and have a variety of works, painting, embroidery, &c.—I have teized Lady Sophia into an imitation of their diligence; but she has spent more money in materials than would purchase the works, when done and throws them all aside, almost as soon as begun. I have an aversion to a vacant heart; I remember a wise old gentleman, who used to say, “when children are doing nothing, they are doing mischief.” “Labour, says Plato, is preferable to idleness, as brightness is to rust.” And bishop Tillotson calls idlers, fools at large: but the scripture terms them the devil’s companions. The habit of trifling away one’s time, appears to me, the greatest of evils: those who are accustomed

customary to this, never quit it without
 a miracle. Reflection is their only re-
 medy, and they have as much aversion
 to that, as the sick man does to the
 bitter potion which might cure him.
 Courage to *think*, is infinitely more rare
 than courage to *act*, and yet the dan-
 ger in the first case is only *imaginary*,
 in the last *real*. The value of moments,
 when cast up, are immense; if thrown
 away, their loss is irretrievable. Every
 moment may be put to some use, and
 will be attended with much more
 pleasure than if unemployed. She, who
 in old age, hopes to look back upon
 past years with satisfaction, must learn
 the value of the present hour; and endea-
 vour to let no particle of time fall use-
 less to the ground. In my greatest afflic-
 tions, I always kept my mind employed
 on

on profitable objects, that it might not prey on itself.

Mr. Bruce admires Lady Sophia's wit, and takes great liberties, in quality of cousin, to correct it, and much pains in reasoning with her. This goodness in him, puts me in mind of the labour of the Danaides, because I am afraid, it is to no purpose. I believe, a male friend is of much greater use, than one of our own sex. I have always thought, however, that cousin-germans were dangerous connections; they are apt to contract the tenderness and familiarity of brothers and sisters, but without the restraint of custom or opinion. He said to her once in my hearing, "Indeed, Lady Sophia, your conduct is such, as would justify any sensible man, did he think unfavourably of your morals? Believe me,

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me, the graces of the mind give an additional lustre to personal charms. The heart of woman, is a temple, where virtue should always reside: I am far from thinking lightly of your sex. You are designed by Providence, to spread the same splendour and chearfulness through the intellectual œconomy, that the celestial bodies diffuse over the material part of the creation.

O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God's works!

“Your friends, Lady Sophia, only wish you to regard times, tempers, and occasions; and then it will be impossible but your humour must please. An amiable woman's virtue supports itself, upon its own intrinsic worth, without borrowing any assistance from the faults of others. She will compare their errors
with

with her own ; to remember the latter, to preserve her charity and humility, and forsake them to be perfect. Mercy and justice are sister graces, and cannot be separated in a virtuous bosom. She will detest guilt, yet pity and pray for the guilty ; will be tender and compassionate to the sufferings incurred by *vice*, yet zealous to promote the cause of virtue.

“ She will be prudently chearful, lest her gravity should disgust her own sex ; and will avoid levity, lest she should encourage improper addresses from the other ; as a man of the world looks upon levity as an invitation, which he scarcely thinks it consistent with his politeness to neglect. And believe me, my lovely cousin, a man is not always at leisure to discern under the drapery of thoughtlessness the woman of discretion.”

I am

LETTER XXII. 173

I am afraid your Ladyship will be quite tired with this long epistle, which I have continued writing for several days, but delayed sending it, in hopes of being able to give you a better account of Lady Bruce, as, contrary to all expectations, when she was at the worst, she apparently grew better : but our hopes were delusive, she died yesterday. It is impossible to give you a just idea of the present grief of this family. Two hours before this admirable woman's dissolution, after having been informed by the physicians (by her own desire) how long she could probably live, she had her family brought into her apartment ; and addressed them all in their turns, suiting her discourse to their different tempers ; recommending every virtue to their practice, which she averred, they could only be enabled to perform by a
thorough

thorough knowledge of the corruption of human nature, and of the wickedness and depravity of their own hearts; which would induce them continually to pray to almighty God, to strengthen their weakness, and bestow on them his grace. She then conjured them to make it the business of their lives, as far as in their power, to obey and please their father; and that, if they should see him an old man, to return him that care by which he had supported their infancy. She then desired them, to cherish and love one another, and told them not to afflict themselves on her account, but only to follow her example to the parent who had been so good to them all. "Respect your father, said she, and *whom ever* he may place over you. And remember, my dear daughters, although you may have families of your own,

no

no age, no state, no character, ought to make you forget the duty you owe to your parent.

“ And to you, my son Charles, I must particularly address myself, on this solemn occasion; I have had much uneasiness on account of hints I have heard you drop, that as men appeared to you to act entirely from their passions, their actions could have neither merit nor demerit. My dear son, let me make it my last request to you, that you will read Dr. Barrow’s writings in proof of the christian religion. If ever an angel might be thought to guide the pen of a writer; surely the pen of that great and good man had such an assistant. In saying this, she reached Mr. Bruce the book, which he respectfully kissed. She then made a sign for them all to retire but Sir James, who remained
some

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some little time with her ; and then desired, that neither he, nor any of her family should appear more in her presence, that her devotions might not be disturbed.

She died—as Young paints the death-bed of the just : Read the Night Thoughts, and there—such was her end ! When Sir James was informed she had breathed her last, he retired to her apartment, where he remained two hours ; he then joined his family.

The tumultuous grief of the younger part of it was checked at his approach. His sorrow was silent, but extreme ; he was solemn and composed. There is a great deal of eloquence in silence, when misfortunes are too great to be expressed.

The loss of a friend, upon whom the heart was fixed, to whom every wish tended ;

tended ; is a severe affliction. The world appears a desert to us. These are the means by which Providence gradually disengages us from the love of life. Other evils fortitude may support, or prudence repel ; but afflictions of this nature, even in the bravest spirits, often disarm prudence, and sap the foundation of fortitude itself. From the grave none can return. My favourite author * says on this subject ; “ reason deserts us at the brink of the grave, and can give no further intelligence. Revelation is not wholly silent ; but where reason quits us, revelation steps in to our aid. And may not hope suggest, what revelation does not confute, that the union of souls may still remain ; and that we who are struggling with sin,

* Dr. Johnson.

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forrow, and infirmities, may have our part in the attention and kindness of those who have finished their course, and are now receiving their reward."

I must not forget to acquaint your Ladyship, that the fears Lady Bruce had contracted for her son's scepticism were groundless.—Her suspicions were in consequence of disputes she had heard him take up with the methodist parson.

I ever am

your Ladyship's
affectionate and
obliged friend,

MARY ROSS.

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L E T T E R XXIII.

From Mr. LEWIS, to Sir JAMES BRUCE.

Geneva.

DEAR SIR,

MY Lord already wrote to you himself, concerning the proposal Lord Dacres made his younger sister: but, fearful so great a match may blind her to his imperfections, by his desire I am to give you a further account of him.

When Mr. Trueman was informed of his Lordship's addressing Lady Harriet, he acquainted us with every circumstance of his former connection with him. In this he was not actuated by resentment, on account of his conduct

to himself. He has a soul superior to such meanness, either as a *man* or a christian. I am happy to find Mr. Bruce speaks so highly of Mr. Trueman. The account he has given of your son has filled me with the most sincere and perfect joy. He must fulfil your every wish—I lay aside my pen, to indulge in idea your happiness; the old man's tears pay a tribute to his satisfaction. When my old friend Mr. R—— recommended Mr. Trueman to me, he said, that “ notwithstanding what had happened between Lord Dacres and him, yet he was bolder than Plato, who had not courage to answer for one of his friends to the tyrant Dionysius. I am not afraid, added he, of bringing reproaches on myself for vouching for my friend, who, notwithstanding his extraordinary talents,

pos-

possesses that modesty which a Latin author honours by the name of ingenuous." One evening, when we were sitting on a bench in the Trialle Walk; my Lord begged Mr. Trueman would tell us every thing he knew of Lord Dacres; and added, if he thought us worthy of his confidence, would also be obliged to him, to acquaint us with his own history, as he was persuaded there must be something very singular in it; and that he had never by birth been designed for the line of life which he now appeared in. Mr. Trueman bowed, and immediately began as follows.

"My real name is not Trueman. I found myself under the necessity of resigning it, from a change of fortune, as it would have looked like an insult to my great relations, and be perhaps

an obstruction to my success ; it is sufficient for me, that whenever I am discovered, it may be in circumstances at which *they*, not *I*, need be ashamed. My birth and connexions are not despicable ; but from different causes, I found myself, at fifteen years of age, in a very dependent situation, after having been bred up in the greatest affluence.

“ Fortune shines upon some men, as the sun shines upon the inhabitants of the frigid zone, who enjoy its lustre a few months, and are obscured in darkness the rest of the year.

“ Young as I was then, I reflected much ; I had an excellent tutor, and the different professors at the university, where I had studied, honoured me so far, as to give me a great character
for

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for my application and literary talents. But if I had any merit, I owed it principally to the instructions of a mother, from whose sentiments I acquired any little knowledge I may possess." Upon our desiring him to acquaint us in what manner she had instructed him, he modestly declined it, by saying it would be tedious; but upon my Lord's entreating it, he proceeded as follows: " I was an only child; my father was a man of the world, whose time was much engrossed between pleasure, and pursuits he had entered into with the view of bettering his fortune, but in the end, proved the destruction of it.

" My mother was tremblingly alive to every idea, that could suggest any means for my instruction, or guarding me from any dangers. From the time

I became capable of reflection, I was taught by her, that to restrain my desires, to command my passions, and to share my pleasures with others, was the only conduct which could promise me happiness ; and by rules like these has all my past life been governed ; my chief care has been to keep my mind composed and undisturbed ; that in every accident which befal me, I might have power to exert my reason, and give my judgment its fair scope. My amiable parent dreaded the learning of the schools ; and the effect which their endless disquisitions might have on my mind. Those who are not born to alter the opinions of the age they live in, ought always to respect them, so long at least as they are consistent with virtue. She therefore sent me, notwithstanding her prejudices, to

to an university with my tutor, but took especial care, at the same time, to instruct me herself, and to implant in me such principles as could not be eradicated by the sophistry of my teachers.

“ Mr. Locke, my dear son, said she, has very judiciously distinguished, and concisely disposed, the various pursuits of human knowledge, in his general discussions of the sciences; every object of which can fall within the compass of the understanding; being comprehended either in the nature of things, the duties of *moral actions*, or the use of the signs, by which our knowledge of either is acquired and communicated.

“ Nature, said she, gave us curiosity to excite our minds to enquiry, but she never intended it to be the principal, far less the sole object of our application; the true and proper object
of

of which is, a constant improvement in virtue. “If I study, (says Montaigne) it is for no other science, than what treats of the knowledge of myself, and instructs me how to live and die well.” The goodness of things (she told me) is comparative, and this does not only hold in respect of extensiveness, but likewise in respect of dignity, character, and all kinds of perfection. If we study astronomy (said she) it will open the mind, and alter our judgment with regard to the magnitude of extended beings.

“But christianity produceth an universal greatness of soul. Philosophy may increase our views in every respect, but christianity extends them beyond the light of nature. The gospel is a system of so refined a philosophy, so exalted a wisdom, and the divine characters that
shine

shine in it, are so conspicuously legible, that nothing but the darkest ignorance, and the blackest corruption, can hinder us from reading them. As we are sensible that, next to the knowledge of the Deity, that of ourselves, and the objects that surround us, are of most importance; we ought to trace out the relations by which this endless chain of beings is connected, in one harmonious plan; to strain all our thoughts to that sublime end, viz. that in the moral world, the same concord and union be preserved, which astonish a contemplative spirit in the harmonious motion of the heavens, in the unvariable series of seasons, in the regulation and embellishment of the corporeal world.

“ Can you look upon yourself, said she, as a part of this wonderful universe, without being interested in its perfections,

tions, and without endeavouring rather to increase, than to disfigure its beauties? Can you consider yourself as a member of the human race, without feeling a powerful inclination of sympathetic love to your brethren, without making their happiness your own, and without cheerfully performing the duties, that our common nature, our common wants, our common prejudices, and expectations prescribe to you. These, my dear son, should be the objects of your observation and research. Instead of mispending your time on such insignificant points as engross the studies of those men, who call themselves philosophers; your endeavours should be to investigate the true nature of things, to discover what relation they bear to one another, and to human nature in particular; and by what applications they
may

may become beneficial, or obnoxious: that some may avoid evils, and obtain all the felicity Providence designs us. If the world would once make a sacrifice of prejudice to reason, how plainly would they discover, that there is but one great and interesting science in the world, the knowledge of human nature, and its relation to the divine: whatever branch of knowledge has no connection with this, is below the attention of a rational and immortal being: and the study of external nature, is useful only so far as it contributes to this end; for which purpose it is only requisite to observe carefully the various phenomena of nature, together with their causes and objects." In this manner did my excellent parent instruct me. In the distressed situation in which I found myself, at so early an age, I could even then have borne the way-

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waywardness of my own fortune with some degree of fortitude. But it made me accuse the malignity of fate, when I knew myself the innocent cause of unhappiness to that best of mothers. This excellent parent, in the course of her applications for me, *bad humbled herself* more than I can even now bear to think of; but had always met with the most discouraging repulses. The first who was unkind to her, influenced the rest: such is the nature of man, that whoever refuses you a favour, is unwilling it should be done you by any other. And few listen without a desire of conviction, to those who advise them to spare their money or interest. These mortifications my mother's tenderness for me had concealed, lest it should hurt my mind: but the habit of reflection, she had taught me, opened my

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my eyes : I often surpris'd her in tears ; which she suppress'd, to encourage me to a fortitude she seem'd unequal to herself : I inform'd myself of her sufferings. It has been observ'd, that men lose their respect for you, in proportion to the favours bestow'd on them : but, perhaps as few know how to give with *delicacy*, as to receive with proper *gratitude*. In the very few favours, we at that time received from our relations, they debas'd the coin of kindness, by the alloy of contempt ; and performed their acts of friendship, as if they were giving alms. Poverty is often accompanied with the loss of reputation. Those are ignorant of the world, who suppose half the bad reports of men, are the consequences of their bad conduct. There are not perhaps more wretches deserted by their friends, because

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cause they are unworthy of their countenance and friendship, than because their misfortunes make them stand too much in need of, and renders them too much dependent upon, that friendship. This last was our case; but as I could not brook the thoughts of it, nor that my mother should be slighted, and far less could suffer the idea of being a burthen to her, I therefore left my native country: but not before I had made an attempt to serve myself, with an uncle, whose only son was then going under the care of my former tutor, Mr. R——, to Geneva, to study there for some time. I called at his house, was refused admittance, in a surly manner, by those very servants, who used before, to shew me the utmost respect. So true it is, that the porter of a great man's gate is a kind of barometer, by which you may discover

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cover the warmth, or coldness of his master's friendship. I afterwards wrote to him a letter, soliciting him to permit me to attend my cousin abroad; which favour, if he would grant, I should ever consider it as the greatest that could be bestowed on me. This request I hardly imagined he could with propriety have refused me, as before the loss of my father and fortune, it had been agreed mutually by our parents that we should go together: and my cousin had been congratulated upon the improvement and advantage he would receive from our connection. Pardon, my Lord, this apparent vanity; I only mention it in order to account for my relations unnatural conduct. My cousin envied, therefore hated me, and all my efforts, in my happier days, could never conquer his aversion. And perhaps the approbation my conduct

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duct demanded, even from himself, excited still more his dislike; and the reflection that others approved it, also was intolerable to him.

“ It is commonly, that the justest dividend nature has given us of her favours, is that of sense, for there are few or none who is not content with their own share. And of those who have an inferior understanding, few care to confess it, even though they have a secret feeling and admonition of the difference: and will never forgive those, whom they suspect know their ignorance. On the contrary, we are always willing to find an excuse for that person's folly, who applauds us: but it is utterly impossible for us to love those we despise, or those we think despise us. You remember the fable of the four merchants, who went to the fair to sell beauty, birth, dignity, and wit;

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wit; all of whom disposed of their merchandize, except the last.

“ I was then so ignorant of the world, as to suppose, that when our equality was destroyed by my loss of fortune, that we could be no longer rivals. In this I was mistaken. I met with a downright refusal, couched under the ungenteelest terms. It was to this effect: acquainting me that all my cousin’s *attendants* were already provided: but told me, that if I chose to be a school-master, there was a vacancy at ——. To this letter, your Lordship may believe, I returned no answer. I found, however, some relief in being freed from that vicissitude of hopes and fears, which had for some time held my mind in the most racking suspense; and, with a kind of gloomy satisfaction, resigned myself to the bitterness of my fate. I went to Mr. R——, whom I

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have already mentioned was my former tutor, and was to attend my cousin abroad. I acquainted him with the bad success of my negotiations. The good man shed tears over me; "My dear child, said he, you are ill calculated for the world; you have a just way of thinking, a sincere heart, and great sensibility; three unfortunate qualities to one in your situation. You remember what the poet says,

If you have children, never give them knowledge,
'Twill spoil their fortune: fools are all the fashion.

The man who bids fairest as candidate for any office, where the public is principally concerned, is not he whose talents raise an idea of *superiority*, but he whose *mediocrity* begets respect." Mr. R—— then asked me what I proposed doing for myself? I answered, that I was deter-

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determined to be no longer a burthen to my mother; and would spare her tender heart a recital of this last cruel usage, and would go somewhere abroad. Young as I was then, I considered, that there can be no country where a *rational* man may not receive improvement, or an *honest* one, be happy.

All places that the eye of Heaven visits,
Are to a wise man ports and happy havens.

My self-love had been deeply wounded by the mortifications I had undergone; and as great delicacy always suffers most, so it enjoys most by its own reflections. Mr. R—— told me he would give me a recommendatory letter to Monsieur D——, at Paris; and that as he had no near relation, and loved me as his son, that he would give me, until I was enabled to provide for myself sufficiently,

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to support and finish my education; and that he made no doubt I should make such a figure in life, as would put to the blush, those who had been so much wanting to themselves, as to renounce me. Before we parted, he gave me the following advice, "In every part of your education, said he, I have often told you, to enquire after first principles. Be diligent in pursuit of learning, but sparing in the use of it: and be sure to conceal a good part of your abilities, and your acquirements, so long as you are in a subordinate station." He desired me not to be discouraged; and told me the Athenians raised a noble statue to the memory of *Æsop*, and placed a *slave* on the pedestal, that men might know, the way to honour was open to all. But, my dear child, never let ambition render you forgetful of your
im-

important concerns; you may recollect the Romans worshipped Virtue and Honour for gods; on which account they built two temples, which were so situated, as none could enter the temple of Honour without passing through that of Virtue." Mr. R——, also urged to me the necessity of attending to exterior accomplishments. "We are often, said he, by superficial manners, induced to love those, whom we cannot esteem; as we are sometimes, from incontestible evidences of merit, compelled to esteem those we cannot love. When *Æneas* depended on the favour of the queen, upon whose coasts he was driven, his divine protectress thought him not sufficiently secured against a repulse, by his piety and bravery: but decorated him for the interview with supernatural beauty." After a thousand kind instructions

we parted, having settled a regular correspondence. I set out for Paris, waited on Monsieur D——, to whom I presented Mr. R——'s letter, which procured me a favourable reception: and my diligence and application, perhaps, procured me the esteem of this respectable gentleman: which undoubtedly facilitated the distinctions that I have since been honoured with from the literary world. The Graces are coy, and he must court them in earnest, who expects to obtain their favours. When a certain *king* asked Euclid the mathematician, whether he could not explain his art to him in a more compendious manner? he answered, that there was *no* royal road to geometry: other things may be seized by arms, or purchased with money, but knowledge can only be gained by study. After five years, in which

which time, I had applied myself with the greatest diligence to the most abstruse sciences, as well as recreative pastimes, and outward embellishments, opportunities, which the beneficence of Mr. R—— had procured me, equal to that which any man of fortune could have had, he wrote to me, that the Duke of D—— had desired him to look out for a gentleman to travel with his son; requiring such qualifications as humanity does not confer: my good old tutor, being partial, recommended me. I only mention this particular, to account for his Grace's having made so large a settlement on me, in case I had staid three years with Lord Dacres; to wit, one thousand pounds per annum, when with him, and five hundreds a year, to be continued afterwards for life. In consequence

quence of this agreement, I met his Lordship in Paris; and soon developed his character. I found he was an infidel, and sacrificed every thing to his passions; that he had a very singular disposition, was full of whims, often acted in an unaccountable manner, and that nobody (but himself) had the key of his irregular conduct. I have since been informed, that his mother had humoured him from his infancy, at the expence of her judgment: that he had never known what it was to be contradicted; and said it was only for the vulgar to be incumbered with the trammels of reason: He sets up for an universal man, because he has a small tincture of every science; and believes himself able to decide in every thing; and that he is a profound lawyer, a great general, and a
 most

most consummate politician : add to all this, he is equally intoxicated with his own opinions, and the infallibility of his systems, as a bonze is of the power of his amulets, which he distributes to his thankful believers.

“It is a fatal arrogance in men, to make their observations merely on the microcosm of themselves, and to believe that no other person has the power of perceiving what they cannot see, and to confine the activity of the human intellect within the narrow bounds of their own knowledge. We may as justly think, that a man’s span is the measure of infinite space, or that the hollow of his hand is the measure of all matter, as that his understanding is the measure of all truth.

“ People of any taste or genius, are at a loss how to employ themselves, when in company with those that have neither.

But,

But, if we will enjoy the kindness of others, we must endure their follies ; and those who cannot persuade themselves to withdraw from society, must, (in an independent situation) be content to pay a tribute of their time, to a multitude of disagreeable engagements.

“ I considered it my duty to fall in, as much as possible, with Lord Dacres’ humour : we live, I believe, in such an age, that more good may be done by seeming to relax a little, than by strictness of behaviour. Such arts, when they include neither guilt nor meanness, it is surely reasonable to use. For it would be folly to want that approbation, that can be so easily procured ; for though we may feel the greatest concerns, we ought not to be above the least. Gaiety becomes only criminal, when it dissipates our attention, from the principal ends of life.

life. The author of *Il Cortigiano*, or the Courtier, makes it necessary, that his pupil should be acquainted with all sorts of amusements : for this reason no doubt, because his view being to ingratiate his pupil with all degrees, he judged the most likely way to succeed, would be to furnish him with such real and seeming talents, as might suit the particular taste of every rank and degree of persons.

“ Sir John Vanbrugh says, “ if you would dive into a man’s heart, you must enter into his pleasures.” And it is a common maxim, and received opinion, that it is to little purpose, that a person can ingratiate himself, with such as they cannot accompany in their amusements. I therefore applied myself, with the utmost diligence, to attach my Lord, if possible, to me, by sacrificing my time,
and

and paying every attention I possibly could to him. He at first was greatly pleased with me : he had expected to find in me, a severe cenfor, and an aukward man. My youth and appearance flattered him, that I would be no enemy to his pleasures, and that I should prove an agreeable companion to him. For some time we agreed very well ; but there were many things I greatly disapproved of, yet passed over, lest I should instil a habit into him, of hearing good advice, without paying attention to it ; or with an actual intention of not following it ; or, what is worse, with a design to elude its force. “ Is not this, continued he, addressing himself to me, the case with most young people, agitated by their passions, whose indiscreet friends are continually pestering them with their advice, at times when they are not capable of listening to it. We should not
be

be prodigal of truth, but reserve it for critical and decisive occasions; when it should be represented in all its force; by which means it is most likely to be productive of the desired effects." I however, insinuated to his Lordship, that neither vicious, nor even innocent pleasures, that are communicated by the senses, can ever give satisfaction to a rational man, who, by a clearer reason, discovering their vanity and insufficiency, will not unprofitably waste his affections upon them : but the pleasures of virtue, which are conveyed to the mind by reflection, are accompanied with a charming force, which confirms a wise man, in the practice of them. Now my Lord, added I, as this is the case, the greatest concern a man ought to have, is to labour to gain such a steadiness of mind,
such

such a method of reasonable thinking, as may not be capable of any interruption. When this is obtained, he must endeavour, with the greatest diligence, to preserve the mind in this happy state. To this end, we must not be less watchful over *innocent*, than over *vicious* recreations; lest an over eagerness in the one does not amuse, or lead us insensibly to the other: for the thoughts being once unfixed, it is not easy to settle them again; and the affections being by degrees disengaged from their proper objects, will be in danger of betaking themselves to false and trifling ones. But such reasoning with Lord Dacres, had no effect: he had a most dissolute set of companions; but as he had no standard of excellence in himself, he could not be hurt by dispositions similar to his own.

'Tis

'Tis meet

That noble minds keep ever with their like ;
For who so firm, that cannot be subdued.

I represented to him, that familiarity with people of low education, has an obvious tendency to hurt us in the esteem of men of superior rank and knowledge ; who naturally make an estimate of our tempers and dispositions, from those with whom we associate, and, in consequence of this, avoid the parties that thus debase themselves. The discovery, however, of an eminent superiority, prevailed with him so far, as *really* to *like* what he only pretended to *suffer*, the conversation of the lowest of mankind. This is often the case with people of superior abilities to his Lordship. The *vanity* of the wisest, consequently is the comfort of the *foolish*,

and seems to be given as an alloy to superior understandings, like cares to superior stations; to preserve a sort of equality to mankind. When I found my remonstrances ineffectual, I endeavoured to let him perceive in my whole countenance, that I felt a kind of horror at his connexions; as to repeat admonitions, would serve only to weaken the force of their impresson on his mind. This was our situation, when one evening, taking a walk in the Thuilleries, we met two young ladies, simple in their dress, but elegant in their appearance. The first had an air of nobility; in every part of her behaviour there was something pleasing and graceful, and without being a perfect beauty, she had certain regular and distinguishing graces, that adorned her whole person; her large blue eyes, were at once piercing and
and

and tender; her hair light, and her countenance highly animated. The other, who appeared rather older, was not barely beautiful, but had diffused all over her person that sweet charm of the *je ne ſçai quoi*, ſo much more powerful than even beauty itſelf; and were Venus to be pictured, this young lady might have furniſhed the model.

“ We gazed with extaſy upon theſe lovely objects, and traced them to their home. We were informed they were the daughters of a Scotch gentleman, who having embarked his fortunes with thoſe of the houſe of Stuart in 1715, had been obliged to renounce his native country, and had forfeited his eſtate to the crown. We were farther told, that he had eſpouſed an Italian lady of high birth, who was lately dead, leaving him theſe two daughters, who were the ſolace

of his life; being young women of the most amiable characters, and the most accomplished ladies in Paris.

“ Lord Dacres said to me, “ Do, my friend, let us get acquainted with them; you have often lamented my connexions with women of bad character. By seeing them, my manners will be polished, I shall be a lover of Virtue, and one of her strictest votaries.”

“ I smiled at his enthusiasm for these charming women, and found it more than equalled in my own breast; and though I knew that love had a malignant power over the mind, and that its fascinations are irresistible, yet I agreed to his request; and enquired with whom they were connected.

“ Upon my return, Lord Dacres, though impatient for my intelligence,
gave

gave me a hearty salute, thanked me a thousand times, and said that I was his dearest friend, before he would suffer me to speak. There are several ways of acquiring the favour of the *great*. That of *virtue* is *uncertain*, that of *flattery* is not *infallible*; but that of *contributing to their pleasures* is *altogether so*.

“ His acknowledgments were redoubled when I told him, that they were commonly twice a week at Madame De Dufen’s, who keeps her house open, to a meeting of the *literati*. That Madame Le Grande, a lady whom I had known, was their most intimate acquaintance; that I had been with her, who had promised to present us to them that very evening. We were introduced accordingly: the house is in the suburbs of Paris; we walked through a pretty long

garden, at the end of which, we were as retired as if we had been a league from town. The house was thatched, and had the appearance of a hut. The floor was covered with rushes, wrought into the prettiest mat; and the walls decorated all round with the finest flowers and shells. The upper part of the room was enclosed as an aviary, with reeds made by the young ladies; in which were all kind of birds, who seemed to vie with each other, by their songs, to return their charming mistresses thanks for their elegant habitation.

“ The old gentleman was very courteous, and had every appearance that indicated his having seen better days. Discretion and dignity appeared in the young ladies’ behaviour; they talked with judgment, and under the propriety
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of seeming simplicity, was discovered much good sense. Their silence promised intelligence; and yet when they spoke, they never disappointed the expectations of the company.

“ Lord Dacres was more astonished than you can well imagine; their conversation was so different from what he had been accustomed to hear from women, that he began to believe them to be of a different species.

“ After some hesitation, he at last ventured to ask Miss Ogilvie, if she was fond of painting; that we were going to the Chartreuse, to see a picture of Le Sœur's; and, if agreeable to the young ladies and Madame Le Grande, should have the honour of attending them.

“ They obligingly accepted his invitation; and Miss Ogilvie said, “ I suppose

the picture your Lordship means, is that of the Cloyster ? it is, in the opinion of the judges, equal to any composition extant, for the passions and fine thoughts. The only fault Le Sœur has been charged with by the connoisseurs, was in his draperies ; the folds are reckoned mean and unnatural." My Lord, could only answer, *that* was the picture he meant, but he hoped to be further entertained by her agreeable observations upon it. As my Lord had attached himself to the eldest, I fell into chat with miss Fanny, whose taste and judgment in painting I found not inferior to her sister's.

" She admired some pieces ; made observations on others, named the artists, whose skill or manner she was acquainted with, and mentioned a few of their capital pieces. I could not help being astonished to hear two young ladies, who,

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I apprehended, had been brought up in such a private manner, speak with so much judgment of those arts, which it usually only *falls* to the lot of people of rank and fortune to converse in the style of *connoisseurs*.

“ Upon our return home, I found my Lord quite in raptures. I said nothing to him; violent passions are no more to be appeased by words than a hurricane. I only took care to throw into my conversation the high respect I had for these ladies; and acquainted him that their mother had been of the Albani family. That although the Italian ladies had been in general uninformed, till of late years that they had a greater intercourse with the French; yet this lady must have been an exception to that observation, as her daughters had been educated by herself; that she had rendered
them

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them perfect mistresses of the French, Italian, and Spanish languages; and capable of reading the Iliad of Homer, the Georgics of Virgil, and Terence's Plays, in the original. In music, poetry, and painting, they both composed, and performed to admiration. My Lord interrupted me, by saying, "This is too much;" and I firmly believed him: it would have answered the unworthy purposes of his soul better, had their personal charms been unattended by their other perfections. I observed him absent, gloomy, thoughtful: I was determined to watch him, that he might not put any scheme in practice against these charming creatures. We waited on them by appointment a few days afterwards; and were received as before, with the greatest complacency by the old gentleman. We were shewn into a gallery
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supported by two rows of pillars, with wreathes of flowers twining round them, exquisitely painted by these lovely artists : at the upper part of the room was a family-picture ; the old man pointing to that of his deceased wife, who was included in it, said, “ *There*, young gentlemen, was the most beautiful and accomplished woman of her age : the best and worthiest of her sex. When she gave me her hand, she was young, lovely, and high-born ; graced every company, and heightened the brilliancy of the court at Florence : whenever she appeared, all others seemed, by a natural impulse, to feel her superiority ; and yet, when she conversed, she had the art of inspiring all with an ease which they never knew before : she joined to the most perfect politeness the most chearful gaiety ; was free from restraint and boldness ;

ness; always gentle, yet never inferior; ever unassuming, yet never ashamed nor awkward: in the Bois de Boulogne, I had the good fortune to save her, and her brother's life, at the hazard of my own: this produced an intimacy—she liked her deliverer; and sacrificed all the honours and grandeur she was intitled to by her birth, for the humble lot, and domestic cares, attending confined circumstances.” After giving that *éloge* so justly due to such excellence, we admired the other pictures: between each pillar hung one.—I admired in particular, that of a Prodigal, in which was represented the extremity of misery and low nature, not foul and burlesque, like Michael-Angelo Caravagio; nor minute, circumstantial, and laborious, like the Dutch painters. The old gentleman asked us, as we admired his daughter's
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paintings so much, if we were fond of music, as they are sister-arts—upon our answering in the affirmative; the young ladies first played on several different instruments, and afterwards sung a *duette*; Miss Ogilvie excelled in brilliancy, and variety of skill; Miss Fanny in art, where no art appeared; and for that elegant simplicity, and truly pathetic expression, which cannot be defined. In short, my Lord, were I to repeat the hundredth part of these sisters' perfections, I should not only perhaps put your patience to the test; but lead you to question the truth of my assertions. Let it suffice to say, that without being in love with them, I think them the most amiable, the most accomplished, and the most perfect of their sex. I became easier in my mind, judging Lord Dacres would never dare to entertain the most
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distant thought of injuring such excellence as the Miss Ogilvies. We are apt to believe pretenders sincere, upon bare appearances, especially in things where we would not dare to feign ourselves. I too soon was undeceived, and from this event, I learned this lesson, which I cannot perhaps properly explain, without paying myself (what your Lordship and Mr. Lewis, may think) too great a compliment: I will, however, hazard an imputation of vanity, and acquaint you that, as a man of sense can easily out-wit a fool, because his designs are inconceivable to his adversary's understanding; so a fool will sometimes be too cunning for the same reason; that is, because he will conceive schemes which could never enter into a wiser head than his own. Counter-plotting an absurd fellow, is like fighting a
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left-handed fencer; you receive a wound, because it comes in a direction from whence you had no reason to expect it, and he gains a victory only from his awkwardness. But to return to my story: we had formed a party to go to St. Dennis, with Madame Le Grande, these young ladies, and another of their acquaintance.

“At twelve o’clock Mr. Ogilvie was not stirring, and as we were to go, three and three, in carriages, Madame Le Grande proposed I should set out first, and bespeak dinner, as Miss Ogilvie could not be prevailed on to go, without seeing her father. As I could not conceive any design, we set out, and arriving at St. Dennis, waited their arrival; but, after some hours, judge of our surprize when they did not appear.

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The sensibility and anguish of heart of the gentle Fanny is not to be described; all her fears were for her father, apprehending he had been taken ill, as his having slept so long was unusual. My terrors were of a different nature. We returned immediately to Paris. When we arrived at Mr. Ogilvie's, an old servant said, "I am glad, Miss Fanny, you are come; where is Miss Ogilvie? my master is quite delirious, and has been calling out for you both, all day." In short, we found that Madame Le Grande had prevailed on Miss Ogilvie to follow us; and not to disturb her father, as he was previously acquainted with the jaunt. The distraction of Miss Fanny, or my uneasiness, are not to be described. I had just presence of mind to tell her, that it would be prudent not
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to mention her sister's absence to her father, until I should go and endeavour to unravel this mystery.

“ I went to Madame Le Grande's : her people said she was gone a jaunt to England, and that her baggage had been sent off the night before. A trifling gratuity made these people, naturally communicative, betray their mistress. I asked in what manner her baggage was to go. They answered it was directed to Naples, which they believed was the sea-port town opposite to England. I returned to miss Fanny, to unfold this dreadful tale, which struck her with the greatest amazement. It appeared plain to us both, that there had been a pre-concerted scheme between Madame Le Grande and Lord Dacres. Miss Ogilvie could not have been accessory to it, not having carried the

smallest thing with her ; yet Madame Le Grande had always been esteemed a woman of a very respectable character ! Mr. Ogilvie had a great regard for her, and she had prescribed a medicine for him the night before, which now alarmed us, as he continued still insensible. I returned immediately to her house, and discovered that, the day before, she had purchased a sleeping potion. This we made no doubt she had administered to the poor old man. A physician, was sent for, a friend of the family. I told him the case ; and, after explaining to Miss Fanny the necessity of keeping this matter secret, lest it should be prejudicial to her sister's reputation, I set out, attended by Le Fleur.

I could discover nothing from our own household, as Lord Dacres had only taken his valet de chambre, Dubois,
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with him. I followed them close: it is unnecessary for me, to repeat to your Lordship, the particulars, which were in the mouths of every one. Let it suffice to say I rescued Miss Ogilvie from the base designs of Lord Dacres, and placed her with the Countess Gozzi, whom I had kept up a literary correspondence with, and who obliged the world with a translation of Terence. Miss Ogilvie acquainted me, that having been absorbed in thought about her father, and vexed their importunity had prevailed on her to leave him, though but for a few hours, she did not perceive they were going a different road for some time; when she discovered it, they shut the blinds of the carriage, and had prepossessed the people on the road, that she was Lord Dacres' sister, whom he was carrying to her parents. My arrival

at Naples happily rendered his after-schemes abortive. Mr. Ogilvie recovered from the dose Madame Le Grande had given him, but remained insensible or stupid for some time ; which proved a very great blessing to him, as his daughter was by that time happily married to the duke D'Elbeuf. Madame Le Grande durst not return to France. How much was I deceived in her character ! You know the Poet says,

Proper deformity seems not in the fiend
So horrid as in woman.

“ Lord Dacres sent me a challenge : as I had once ventured my life to save his, I did not imagine he could doubt my courage, and returned him an answer, that “ I had too much value for my life and honour, to expose them at the caprice of every ruffian that should
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think fit to challenge me ; but if he were weary of his life, there were other means to end it, besides the point of my sword."

" But finding his Lordship had misrepresented this affair, I acquainted him that I had wrritten to the Duke his father, to resign the charge he had intrusted me with ; and that as soon as I received the answer, when he should be no longer under my authority, I would not then refuse him the satisfaction he was so eager for. It soon arrived : the contents were curious ; the Duke asked me, " what the devil had I to do with his son's gallantries ? That he was happy to find his boy a man of spirit ; and regretted that, whilst I had raised Lord Dacres' character, by making this affair public, I had hurt my own ; and also put an end to his services."

“ I immediately wrote to Lord Dacres, that I was now ready to meet him, *when* and *where* he pleased. The following day was fixed on. — Notwithstanding his Lordship’s great desire of encountering me, yet fear intimidated him, and he stood as much confounded as Paris, when he presented himself to fight Menelaus. The poet says,

When I could not be honest
I never yet was valiant.

Our seconds (Mr. Filmer was mine) were greatly amused with the scene—he held out his hand to me, and said, “ Faith, Trueman, for all that has passed, I love you too well, to put you to death. Get me the girl : my father gives me leave to marry her ; and there will be an end to all our differences. For hang me, if I don’t love her.”

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“ I smiled at this address, and his love, which was more lighted up by the torch of the Furies than that of the God of Love; and then returned his Lordship my thanks for the regard he had expressed for my safety; but declined any commission for the Lady, or any future connection with himself.

“ I shall never forgive villainy, further than my religion obliges me, and that extends not either to our confidence, or friendship. The greatest slavery is that of being obliged to serve those who are unworthy to command us. But, it is a kind of agreeable servitude to be obliged to those whom we esteem.

“ According to my maxim, whoever connects himself with people of bad character, has no right to complain of ill usage; or at least deserves but little compassion: and therefore, from com-

pany of that kind, they are wisest who keep themselves at a distance. The prudent Ulysses preferred the small barren island of Ithaca, where he was free, and his aged wife to whom he had been married twenty years, to the enchanted island of the beautiful Calypso, where he would have been immortal and a slave. No *pecuniary reward* can supply, to a man of honour, the *loss of fame*; a refusal argues no humility, as he will thereby find the means of gratifying his vanity. A philosopher, having refused a present from a great man, told his wife, who asked why he did so? “that it was, because he had *his* ambition, as the great man had *his*.”

“It is almost needless to acquaint your Lordship, that the extraordinary accomplishments and beauty of Miss Ogilvie,

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procured her the admiration of all who saw her, under the protection of the Countess Gozzi, who perfectly idolised her; her mother's relations were happy to acknowledge her, though they had slighted and contemned that excellent woman, when alive, for marrying Mr. Ogilvie, who was not her inferior by birth, being the brother of a Scotch peer. Among Miss Ogilvie's admirers, the Duke D'Elbeuf was the successful lover: it was his father, who in 1736, digging a well at his seat at Portici, discovered Herculaneum. Her marriage was soon announced to the world: Lord Dacres, whose letters had been returned unopened, found his pride piqued, and his inclination heightened by the difficulty he found in gratifying it. He immediately left Naples, accusing his stars, and imprecating vengeance on
me,

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me. Mr. Filmer happened to sup with me that evening: as I understood your Lordship's sisters are under his mother's care, I shall repeat to you what he said, when speaking of his Lordship. "He affronted me, said he, with that insolent kind of politeness, which while it affects the air of condescension, seems to mark the superiority on one side, and subordination on the other. A proud man never shews his pride so much as when he is civil: but I received his address so coldly, that it deprived him of the advantages he wished to take, and soon reduced him to a level, which he had endeavoured so haughtily to destroy.

"The more I feel myself inclined to pay proper attentions to others, the less can I bear to have them exacted from me: and he is one that seems to demand them. As he seems conscious his just pretensions

tenfions to refpect are fo very difputable, he is on that account the more greedy of deference: but to fuch, I am never very prodigal of my complaifance. We do not eafily confider him as great, whom our eyes fhew us to be little, whose follies and vices we fhould blufh to adopt. Fortune feems jealous of Nature, and generally confines her favours to thofe of the leaft merit, and feweft accomplifhments: and fhe is fo fond of folly, that where fhe does not find men fools, fhe makes them fo.

“ I was going to accompany the Duke and Dutchefs to Paris, when my ever valuable and revered friend, Mr. R——, had recommended me to you.” Mr. Trueman then fhewed us a letter he had received from the Duke, in which he acquainted him of his happinefs, and of Mr. Ogilvie and his daughter.

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ter being at Naples—The letter contained reproaches for making himself dependent on any one, when he knew he might command his fortune; and concluded with an invitation for my Lord and suite, to take up their abode at Portici, when he went to Naples. We leave this place to-morrow.—Farewell, my worthy friend : my respects to all your family—I am fearful of naming them. I ever am,

my dear Sir,

your faithful,

humble servant,

JAMES LEWIS.

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L E T T E R XXIV.

From Mrs. Ross, to Lady FILMER.

DEAR MADAM,

I am become so fond of farming, that
I have with great pleasure read Dryden's Translation of the Georgics. Sir James is an excellent landlord; he does not rack his tenants, but preserves a happy medium. The farmers pay very dear for the indulgence that some afford, in paying their rents: this tenderness is almost always hurtful to them. Low rents are commonly ill-paid; when a man pays a reasonable rent for his farm, he knows he must work to procure it. This necessity for application is attended with the happiest consequences. The industry of the Dutch is imputed to the sterility of Holland, which requires
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the strictest attention of the inhabitants for procuring the necessaries of life. The same observation may be extended to Venice and Genoa in Italy, Nuremberg in Germany, and Limoges in France. And in Arragon, formerly the barrenness of the soil, rendered the people hardy and courageous: opposed to Arragon stands Egypt, the fertility of which renders the inhabitants soft and effeminate. And the New Zealanders, from the ease with which the bread-tree supplies their necessaries of food and raiment, are sunk into supine indolence and debauchery. On the other hand, many poor farmers suffer from the fear, that after they have exerted all their industry to improve their ground, they will be turned out at the end of the lease, or have their rents advanced: this lessens their diligence, and makes them fearful of contracting difficulties from their labour.

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It is the great misfortune of the laborious part of our species, that people in superior stations, seldom think of their situation, and know so little of the hardships they encounter. Were landlords to act like Sir James, they would reflect that their ease and wealth are entirely owing to the incessant labour of these poor people; in consequence of this, they would treat them with humanity. His tenants have always found him considerate and good-natured. The failure of crops, the loss of cattle, or any casualties, have awakened his humanity and excited his generosity. He permits farmers, or the sons of farmers, to shoot. "Who, says he, can have such pretensions to a share of the game as those whose property are its support?" In this neighbourhood they make use of cattle instead of horses, in labouring the ground; being convinced (through Sir

James's

James's influence) that Britain by following trade, and neglecting agriculture (or suffering it to be ingrossed) is likely to lose both her trade and her people. The number of horses is so much increased among people of all ranks, that they consume as much as would maintain the greatest part of the people in the kingdom. The calculations it seems is, if a horse consumes two bushels of corn a week, 500,000 would consume 6,500,000 quarters, per annum; whereas all the people in England use but 7,500,000 quarters. I am obliged to leave off.—
Farewell, my respectable friend,

ever your affectionate,

and obliged,

MARY ROSS.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.